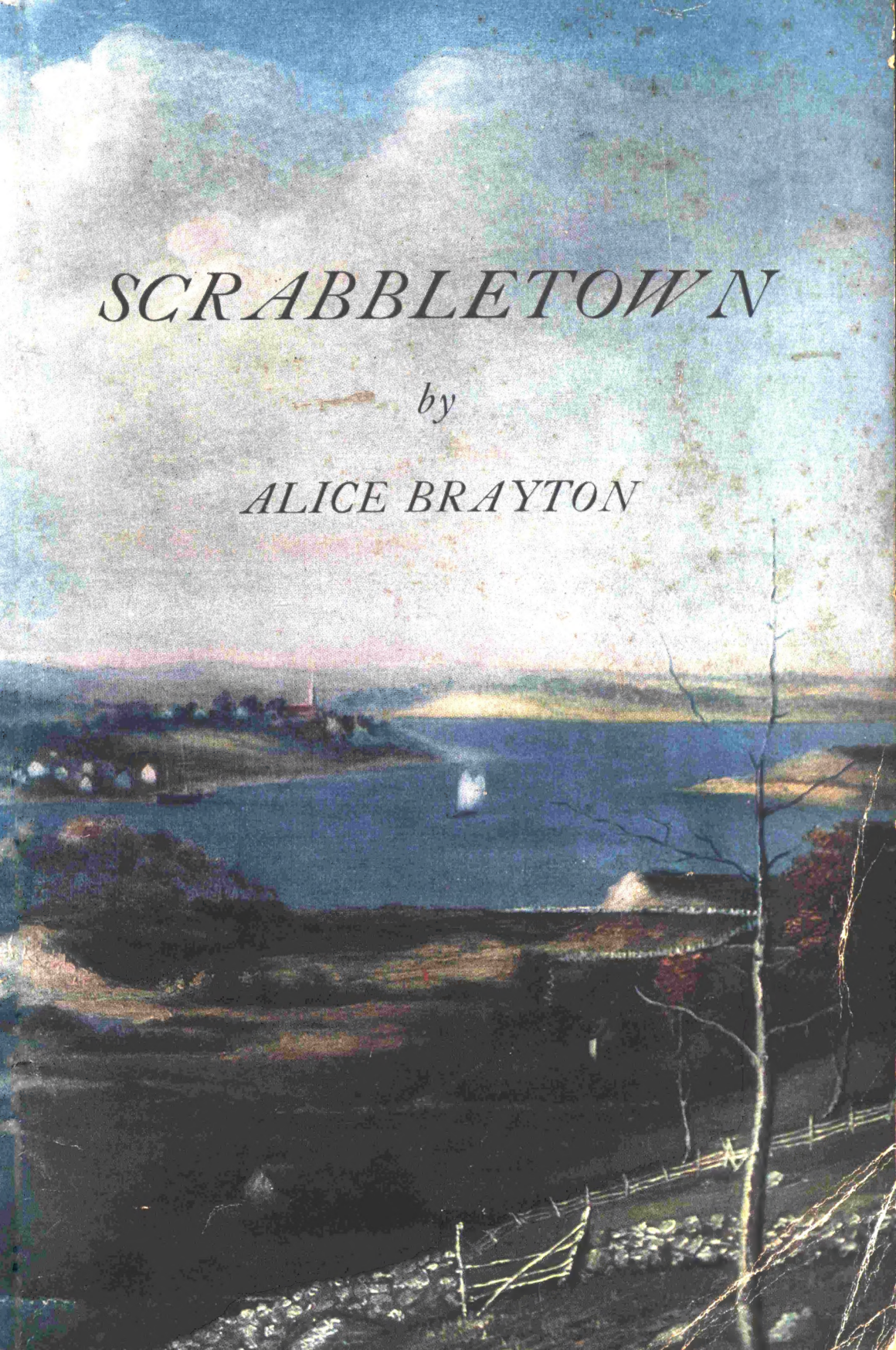
SCRABBLETOWN

by

ALICE BRAYTON



TRADING IN SCRABBLETOWN

BY

ALICE BRAYTON

PREFACE

THE material used in this publication was found in a barrel of papers presented to the Fall River Historical Society by John Summerfield Brayton, in the summer of 1948. There were over 4000 papers in the barrel; well preserved, though some had been nibbled by mice. And none of those 4000 papers had ever appeared in print—never appeared at all, I understand, since the barrel head was nailed down a hundred years ago.

The papers were concerned with trading in Scrabbletoun, an old suburb of Swansea, Massachusetts, just about, I should say, ten miles from the farmhouse on the Taunton where the barrel was found.

Trading a dull subject? By no means; according to the barrel the traders of Scrabbletown led a most exciting life, packed with adventure steadied by responsibility, completely insecure, very satisfactory to those who succeeded or even survived—and you had a run for your money if you didn't. I am trying to present this manysided life as revealed by the papers in the barrel. You may find me incredible. I read all the papers, the 4000; please believe that, anyway.

The latest paper was written in 1832, which is more than a world away, and the earliest was a lottery ticket of 1814; not to be thought of as wicked, for I judge from other papers that nearly everybody in Scrabbletown took chances. Lottery tickets to the "Rhode Island State Lottery" were sold over the counter. "A fool and his money are soon parted" was a copybook saying of theirs, however, and although there were quite a few legal papers in the barrel I found no trace of any law attempting to protect fools. Indeed, even the practice of actually jailing persons who had bought more than they could pay for, prevailed through the whole barrel period, and I read some sad letters from some very foolish men who owed money to the traders of Scrabbletown.

The barrel letters were easily deciphered; though some of the spelling was queer, it was always comprehensible. Going over the papers it seemed to me that the whole population had somehow learned to read and write pretty well; in the barrel there was only one paper signed with

a mark. And that was the mark of Prince Potter, a freed slave, father of Quanny Potter who sold seven sheep in 1824. Possibly he had been crippled by arthritis; perhaps when young he too could have written his name. You will not find me jumping to conclusions.

Except for that one lottery ticket, there was no paper of 1814 in the barrel and there was nothing dated 1815 but an account book bound in stiff marbled covers. It was backed by real leather; to last, you know. No one at that time bought anything not likely to wear well. The book came from the shop of John Brewer, a bookbinder and bookseller of Providence. On the fly leaf is written in an excellent, really distinguished hand,

"The property of Israel Brayton
March 21, 1815. Swanzey."

It was the discovery of this book that gave me my first clue to the ownership of the barrel papers. There is no doubt that the barrel and the papers were the property of an Israel Brayton who traded in Scrabbletown in 1815-1832, and in 1832 shut up shop, crammed all of his own papers and any others around the shop, into the barrel, nailed down the barrel head, took the barrel over to the attic of the farm house in Somerset where it has just been discovered, and thought no more about it for the next hundred years.

Who was this Israel Brayton? The barrel relates him to the entire countryside. He knew everybody, apparently, was well known to everybody. But he was a quiet man, I think, cautious, self-contained. Notoriety, publicity, arrogance, even modest pride, were deadly sins in his New England eyes. And so, what he told to no one, no one repeated, and finally no one knew.

His descendants of today had never heard of Scrabbletown before the finding of the barrel, had never known that Grandfather Brayton had ever been in trade.

Least said, soonest mended, he thought; and it is true—but I must tell you something of the Trader as well as the Trade of Scrabbletown—just a little—I hope he will not mind—it was all a long time ago.

Trading in Scrabbletown

CONCERNING ISRAEL BRAYTON, TRADER

ISRAEL Brayton's father was John Brayton, son of Israel Brayton, grandson of Preserved Brayton; all of Somerset. Letters from John Brayton to his son Israel were in the barrel. So we know.

Israel, you notice, was named for his grandfather. Other members of his family were three older sisters; Mary, Sarah, and Nancy. Their letters also were in the barrel—nice little letters to brother Israel. And nice little bills, too, from brother Israel. He had an elder brother who died young, at sea; and the barrel holds letters from another brother—he wrote from Warren. We gather that at one time he was Captain of a ship that did some trading along the coast—Captain Stephen. Israel had, also, five younger brothers and sisters. They are not in the barrel but he had them.

At the time of Israel's birth, in 1792, this rapidly increasing family was living in an old farmhouse, built in 1715, on the crest of its own one hundred and seventy-five acre farm in Somerset on the West Shore of the Taunton River near the river's mouth. They had a fine view of Mount Hope Bay from their southern windows. There was a well-filled family graveyard in the back orchard, a little red schoolhouse up the road "on William Read's land," built partly with Brayton money, a stone wharf for Brayton boats down by the river.

When Israel was four years old, his father built a larger farmhouse, nearer the river bank, and in this new house the little Braytons of Israel's generation grew up. Their elders were talking about the Late War. They meant the War of the Revolution. Having suffered severely from the effects of that victory on their business, they were trying to make good. Some of their most prosperous and competent neighbors had been loyal to the Crown. They were simply not there any more. And they were missed. Others, it was suspected, had been loyal in secret, as has been lately proved. It had done them no good. They were ruined with the rest. And all about on the farms were the crippled and the pensioned men.

Conditions were getting better, slowly; a few new houses had been built, a few new ships had been launched. Nobody around here between the Revolution and the War of 1812 seems to have been expecting such utter disaster as another war. But even before the actual declaration of war, in 1812, their world to their consternation went to pieces. Again Somerset ships were taken by British ships. Somerset, Swansea, Trojan, and Scrabbletown men—sailors before the mast—were pressed. The ship yards of Somerset, Dighton, Berkeley, Assonet, Warren, Bristol, Providence, Lee's River, everywhere—closed down, and commerce ceased to be. Israel's people had lived on their farms but they had lived by their shipyards and their shipping.

When the War of 1812 was officially declared on June 18th, Israel was 20 years old. His father was on the draft board of the town. Of course Israel went off with the other Somerset men to fight the Britishers. They went, I think, as far as New Bedford.

Israel incurred a disability, if the barrel is to be trusted. He was discharged from the Army. There is a good deal in the barrel about this disability. Israel in after days thought he should be excused from military drill. When the local Militia would not excuse him, he just stayed away. There is a note in the barrel acknowledging the payment of his fine for so doing. In order to get out of drill, which was time-consuming at least, for the Militia rarely met in Israel's village, Israel eventually had to have affadavits from two local doctors as to his disability. His sister had married Dr. Winslow, Dr. Lloyd Brayton was his cousin. The authorities were skeptical. Dr. Winslow's second letter did the trick. The first was not accepted.

"Samuel Read

Lieut, Commander. Sir:

Mr. Israel Brayton belonging to your Company has and is now troubled with a lameness and weakness in his back and legs, which may be termed of a rheumatic tendency, and in my opinion ought to excuse him from military duty

Yours in respect

John Winslow"

In August, 1813, as soon as he was free of the Army, Israel married. His bride was a neighbor's girl, Keziah Anthony, daughter of David Anthony and his wife Submit Wheeler. The Anthony farm lay east of Lee's River, not an hour's walk across the fields from the Brayton Farm on the Taunton. Keziah was Israel's third cousin, and kinship was of much account. You knew what you were getting. The marriage was most practical. Israel, just come of age, not physically strong, had to start out on his own. He needed help. And both the Anthony and the Wheeler connections, as was expected, proved useful. There are hundreds of communications in the barrel from Hezekiah Anthony of Providence and David Anthony of Troy, both brothers of Israel's wife, both prosperous merchants in their day. There is a helpful letter from Nathaniel Wheeler, her uncle.

But nobody could be very useful in 1813. With all the shipping stopped and the shipyards closed, there was no berth for Israel in any countinghouse, no need for him as supercargo—a man with a lame back isn't much good on a farm.

Israel took his bride up state to Foxboro, where he taught in the District School. In Foxboro or thereabouts—boundary lines were changing fast—their first child was born, little Mary, who, herself, at the age of eighteen was teaching school in Fall River. You know perhaps that later in life she gave the B.M.C. Durfee High School to the City of Fall River in memory of her son.

The family was always interested in education and Israel served on the School Committee of Swansea for years and preserved in the barrel a number of letters from various people who wanted jobs.

In 1815, after the President had ratified the Treaty of Ghent on February 17th, and the War was surely over, Israel and Kezia and little Mary left Foxboro for their own part of the world, where, in the small village of Scrabbletown near Swansea, Israel began his career as a Trader. And went to Providence and bought that first account book of which I have told you.

TRADING WITH THE

SWANSEA UNION COTTON MANUFACTURING COMPANY

Back in 1804, ten years before this story begins, Dexter Wheeler, an uncle of Israel Brayton's wife, had bought the Martin Farm in Swansea; 43 acres with water power and a grist mill. In 1806, he sold half his farm to his brother, Nathaniel, the village blacksmith. The brothers intended to build and operate a Cotton Yarn Factory. This was years before the power loom had been used successfully anywhere in the country, twenty six years before mule spinning was even attempted.

Factory construction went on slowly. Dexter Wheeler quit, though his brother Nathaniel Wheeler continued to be interested for some years longer. Ownership of the yarn mill became involved. Then the War of 1812 stopped the shipping north of cotton—overland transportation was of course impossible. And you can't run a cotton factory without cotton, you know. And you can't raise a cotton crop in New England—in case you don't know!

There was reorganization at the close of the War. The third oldest paper in the barrel is a certificate of stock in this "Swansea Union Cotton Manufacturing Company" as it finally came to be called. The stock had been issued to Wheaton Luther, February 21, 1816, when he was clerking for Israel in Scrabbletown and must have been left carelessly around the store. (This Wheaton Luther was a Somerset man, his board bill in Swansea where he stayed with David Brown was also in the barrel, paid up to August 1, 1816). Wheaton gave $145.00 for his mill stock. It was not a whole share of stock, only a quarter share, and he did not pay for it all at once, but in 39 installments. This is testimony to Wheaton's industry. (Though the lottery ticket was his). And to his small wages. And to the difficulty men had in getting any capital at all to finance a yarn mill.

By the close of 1815, the factory was spinning some cotton. The spinners had been carefully selected, for the factory machinery was supposed to be rather a secret, certainly experimental, the process not too easy to get the hang of. At first the spinners were eager to take home

the yarn and weave it on their own looms. Their families and friends wanted the work. But this was haphazard and unbusinesslike and would never do. There must be a distributing center for the yarn, a center to which the finished work could be returned, inspected, paid for.

Uncle Nathaniel Wheeler wrote up to his niece Kezia. He was still running his blacksmith shop in Swansea and knew what was going on. He saw what looked like a good job for Israel—the factory needed some one to run a Company Store.

Why a Store? Because the weavers would not want to be paid in cash, he knew very well they wouldn't. They would want to be paid in goods—which they could get immediately. They certainly would not want to save what they might earn, for the farms were short of everything and needed replacements at once. With no shipping, not only cotton but many staples had not come up from the South; no English or West Indian Goods had been in the market for a long time, no whale ships had brought oil for the lamps of Swansea, no ships of any kind had brought any lamps.

After sounding out the Swansea Union Cotton Manufacturing Company, Israel and Kezia and Mary came down at once, as I have told you, and Israel found housing in Swansea for his family and began to look about for a partner. He was a cautious man, was Israel.

John Mason, well thought of in Swansea where he was Postmaster, was not averse to investing in the project. The two men formed what they called a "Co-Partnership". They bought a small shop whose owner had failed. They bought the shop and its meagre contents at auction. And what they bought and what they paid for it is listed in the barrel.

They filled the almost empty shelves with, well, with everything. I have read the inventories. They were then ready to trade with the Swansea Union Cotton Manufacturing Company; and with the whole countryside.

And they did. And Israel continued to do so until he went out of business altogether in 1832. Seventeen years. A few years later the Swansea Union Cotton Manufacturing Company's factory burned down; bankrupt, I have heard. Of that the barrel knows nothing. It was a very successful little yarn factory while it lasted.

Brayton and Mason had engaged Wheaton Luther as clerk. (Yes. He was a cousin of Kezia's). For they did not intend to spend much time in the shop themselves. Mason had his post-office. Israel had to get around. All their ventures were complicated and were going to need personal attention. Wheaton Luther proved to be efficient, though he certainly conducted many affairs of his own on the side. And Mrs. Brayton (Kezia), after the birth of her second child, little William Bowers, in August, 1816, helped in the store when needed.

"Mr Brayton - - - - please to send me the handkerchief that your wife laid aside - - - and charge it - - -

Sarah Ann Luther"

As soon as little Mary could reach up to the counter, she too helped out, after school hours. She was a very handsome girl, and graceful. Her father hired a dancing teacher to give her dancing lessons. The bill is in the Barrel. Also I found a bill showing that she began her regular schooling at the age of three.

Israel spent the rest of the year of 1815 riding about the country-side making connections with the weavers needed to weave the spun yarn of the factory. He knew all the farms and the villages, of course. He had grown up among them. He got the names of quite a lot of reliable men and women who would be willing to weave for the Swansea Union Cotton Manufacturing Company through the agency of Brayton and Mason. They began to come in for yarn. Israel started the Weave Books found in the barrel.

We know from these books the prices paid each man and woman, and the pattern each had to follow.

As the amount of yarn spun in the factory increased, the number of weavers had to be increased. The better weavers—any very good weaver had always been celebrated through the villages—were the first employed by Israel—also the weavers nearest to Scrabbletown. Weaving, I think, was an Art, when Israel went to find his weavers; and started to make up his weave books. Possibly it did not remain an art for long. The demand for weavers was soon so great that the factory could not—did not—reject badly woven cloth. The price paid for the weaving was the same for good or bad. Each weaver knew that a critical appraisal of

the quality of his finished work was placed against his name, but the factory, though it grumbled, took the good, bad, indifferent. Every weaver got his pay, didn't he—why worry? Occasionally a man wove so badly that he could not be kept on the list—but only occasionally.

And the factory was not spinning the yarn evenly—not as well as the better home spinners had spun it. Down in the weave book went the comment of the weaver who was asked to weave bad ("tender") yarn. "The yarn was very rotten in spooling" wrote Sarah Ann Luther. But it was rarely returned unwoven. Possibly the weavers hated to waste their time weaving bad yarn—their own spinning had been pretty good. But they wove what Israel gave them. Of course they did—eventually. And it made usable cloth, mostly.

Finally, few bothered to weave too well, I suppose. Soon they all got used to the second rate. Along the village streets you would have heard the looms clicking. New prosperity could have been seen about the farms.

Men wove this factory yarn more often than women. Retired sea-captains—seafaring men without ships at the moment—sat down at the loom, especially in the winter months. And still the demand for weavers grew. The yarn was taken by weavers living in Assonet, Barrington, Dighton, Rehoboth, Tiverton, Warren, Freetown and Troy (old names for Fall River) as well as by those living in Swansea and Somerset and the farms round about. And it was all distributed by Brayton and Mason who checked it most carefully. There was a system by which yarn was sent to the homes of the weavers by baggage waggon, the woven cloth returned the same way. But many weavers did not live on the baggage waggon route and there were horses on every farm. Farmers would ride in to Scrabbletown, have a drink, get the yarn their households needed; and bring back to Israel the woven cloth in their own good time. I must repeat that they could have been paid in cash had they so desired. But few did so desire. For they could select goods right off the shelves—there was no better store in Swansea than the little Company Store run by Brayton and Mason.

The farmers would sometimes bring in fresh eggs, a pail of berries, some bear steaks or venison—Israel was always glad to get anything in

This Piece is calculated to make 8 yds.
in a 44 slate, 24 wide.

No. 640 Pattern. No. 15

72 Sks. Blue — Warp.
72 do white — do
do do
do do
76 Sks. Blue — Woof.
76 do white — do
do do
do do

To be Warped.

6 Blue
6 White

To be Filled.

6 Blue
6 White

3½ spools, 4 skeins on a spool, will warp the piece.

The weaving will be cents per yard, if well wove and trimmed.

☞Weavers must return the yarn left, with the cloth.

The cloth must be trimmed and returned free from stains and dirt; and if it is too sleazy, or damaged in any way whatever, a deduction will be made from the above price.

Return this Ticket with the cloth.

000

16½

the way of trade. There is record of a crop of Swansea currants so disposed of, to a man down from Dighton. He was going to make currant wine. A village shoemaker would make a few extra shoes for the shop; in trade for a gilt mirror and some imported rum.

For of course Brayton and Mason carried rum both imported and domestic—some weavers favored one, some another. They even stocked Port Wine, straight from Spain to Somerset. Silk from China could be had, too, and French Wall Paper; British goods, surprisingly, were very popular the moment the British were defeated.

When the weavers had brought in their cloth, and it had been inspected, Israel often picked out some particularly good piece to keep in stock. He arranged this with the factory. Households busy weaving for the factory sometimes needed a little cotton cloth for household use which they no longer had the time to spin and weave; especially bed-ticking.

Israel kept more and more of this homewoven cloth for trading. He had to send his cart up to Boston where he bought his main supplies of drygoods, china and glass ware, and it seemed foolish to send it empty. He began to load up with cloth and goosefeathers, etc. And trade was soon pretty brisk. A Company Store in Raynham took all he could spare; he stopped off in Raynham on the way up. There was in Boston as at home an especially good demand for bed-ticking. The trade in more fancy weaves was not always satisfactory.

With the yarn issued to the weavers, went, as I have said, "directions". Each weaver was told by the factory what colors to use, what design to make. Yarn of each color, just enough, went with each bundle.

There were found in the barrel, a few pieces of the woven cloth. They show the red and the orange yarn, the two shades of blue, and the general look of this home-and-factory product. More white yarn was given out than colored—undyed, a "natural" white. The bits of cloth are most pleasing.

Weavers who were accustomed to weave their own devised patterns, as many were, naturally found these directions irksome. But it was take it or leave it, and they took it, and brought back their finished work to the Company Store, getting in exchange, women's kid boots, teapots

of lustre ware, good China Tea. It probably seemed worth it. Of course, Brayton and Mason kept Store Books as well as Weave Books—it is easy to trace by name and date the goods that the weavers selected.

The Swansea Union Cotton Manufacturing Company gave their spinners credit at Brayton and Mason's store. There are hundreds of little notes in the barrel signed by the Factory Manager, Benjamin Anthony, asking that the bearer be given credit for certain specified articles, the same to be charged to the Company. It meant more book keeping for Israel, but what could he do about it. Yes, there are hundreds of such notes, and nobody knows how many more were destroyed. More personal notes run as follows:

"You must not trust Elisha Sweet". This was in 1820.

"Please to let Otis Handy have cloth nuff for jacket and trowsers and charge the same to me

Abraham Gardner".

"Please to let the bearer have eight shillings worth out of your store and charge the same to me

Abraham Gardner" (notice, they wrote of shillings).

"It is particularly requested as a favor that if Jeremiah Brown should send any of his children or family for spirits that you should refuse him, and confer a favour upon his family who on account of his excessive drinking are much distressed

Swanzey. October 13, 1828. A friend."

"Please to let the bearer have one dollar and 59 cents on my weaving Account. Isaac Threeshere."

"Please to let the bearer have a pint of lamp oil for the eggs which Gardner Slade left. Mary Earle."

Not only the weavers and the spinners but even some of the relatives were being obliged. And that did complicate things.

"Betsy P. Slade wants you to send her a yard of Italian Crape.

Phoebe Slade"

"Please let the boy have seven pounds of fish and charge to me.

Charles Slade."

All this credit was none too good. But that was the way the village wanted it. It kept them in debt. Had they wished to leave! But they

did not want to leave. They were very well pleased with Scrabbletown and Swansey. Just read the letters in the barrel. People were moving in, not moving out.

Stocking the Company Store

To stock their stores, the partners had had to buy an immense variety of things. Long and varied invoices are in the barrel. I have seen in the homes of the descendants of the men and women who wove for Brayton and Mason, the china they took in trade for the cloth they carried back to the Company Store. I have seen the furniture, the wall hangings, the linen, that Brayton and Mason sold to the countryside. There is nothing better.

The trade, with Boston especially, grew rapidly. Israel picked up what he could, where he could, but most of his drygoods were brought over the road from Boston. Philip Bowers was soon renting his waggon to take Israel's venture in woven cloth to Boston, weekly; (before Israel bought a waggon of his own;) bringing back all he could carry; and very bulky many of the articles were. Once he brought down a trunk. But that was a special order. By the way, nothing from Boston was sent down on approval or in speculation.

Israel had some merchandize brought down by the regular baggage waggon. Perhaps the need for a waggon of his own was more obvious then than now. It will help to understand his situation if we read a Boston newspaper of 1819:

"Taken from behind the Baggage Waggon, between Boston and Milton Hills, on Monday afternoon, by cutting the rope with which it was fastened, a basket containing knives, forks, a few snuffers and trays, pocket knives, slates, Naples soap, brass lamps and candlesticks—reward ten dollars." In the same issue: "Just received from London, drygoods. Gentlemen can occasionally be furnished with Garments readymade." And—"Lane and Honeywell have received—from Bremen—scales, lookingglasses, Bristol teapots." Israel's customers expected him to stock whatever was advertised, of course, and get it down to Swansea somehow.

Many Boston wholesale houses did business with Israel Brayton. Appleton and Paige sold him book muslin, Brittania handkerchiefs, red flannel, lilac Calico, pink and white robes, Tartan Plaid, Caroline Plaid, swansdown, and many other things. Fowle and Lincoln sold him India Goods, mostly Indian Shawls.

Grant's Paper Hanging Warehouse at 6 Union Street (near the Old Market) sold him both imported and domestic wall paper; many rolls of striped paper and some with borders.

James W. Paige and Co. sold him scarlet chintz prints—among other things. Norcross and Mellon, later Otis Norcross and Co., sold him blue edged plates, tifflers and muffins. Lustre tea sets. State House Plates. Imported glass ware. Fancy mugs. Toy images. Oval tea pots and sugar bowls. Nappies. Threaded creams. Square sallads. And so forth.

Thomas Tarbell of 66 State Street, under the Massachusetts Bank; Rich silks. Thomas Thurber; Italian silks, Russian sheetings, flag handkerchiefs. Tuckerman, Rogers and Cushing; Blue broadcloths, towels, tablecloths, Madras handkerchiefs, white silk.

Hubbard and Greenough at 69 State Street, sold him Russian sheetings and hooks and eyes. Richard and Seaver of 5 Liberty Square sold him Tartan Plaid, woolen stockings, doeskin mittens, Canton silk, spool cotton, tape, silk gloves, Mecklin lace; and J. and E. Phillips sold him Canton crape and sarsanet.

Thomas A. Davis sold him brass candlesticks and shell canes, while Lowell, Adams and Co. sold him brass andirons and supporters.

Charles Davenport sold him nothing but Malaga raisens, and Rufus Farnham furnished him with nothing but gold beads.

But Lane and Honeywell at 17 Dock Square sold him all sorts of hardware, particularly snuff boxes.

Lane and Read sold him knives and forks, German Jews Harps, gilt buttons, black tin tea pots, and Maynard and Noyes' ink powder.

P. Hale sold him velvet bindings, Valentia shawls, Thread, and Merrimack sheetings, along with other commodities.

There were other Boston merchants who carried his accounts, of course. One day, Israel bought from Jeremiah Fitch, of 5 Market Street, Boston, some "Power Loom Cotton Cloth". This was in 1820. Of course he did not know that the power loom cotton cloth would soon be shutting down the looms in the farmhouses. He did not know that the farms and villages were at the peak of their buying power, their desire and their ability to buy really beautiful things.

This trading in what we call "luxury articles", was hazardous. But all trading was a venture, as Israel well knew. He could not always pay his bills promptly. There are letters from the Boston firms demanding settlement, really demanding it. There are also letters showing that Israel began at once to try to collect money due him. He was not always successful. There must have been anxious moments in the back room of the shop in Scrabbletown, fairly often. There was no security that the firm might not fail, the factory did not stand behind it. Israel had to borrow money from the bank occasionally—and would have borrowed more often if the bank had been more willing to lend. It is also true that Israel was caught out in passing counterfeit money rather surprisingly often. He apparently took it without a thought and sent it up to the Boston Merchants who were more thoughtful. The letters from the Boston Firms about counterfeit money are unpleasant, but Israel kept them and put them in the barrel.

I think Israel's solvency amazing, considering all the irons he had in the fire. And he was only a farm boy, with no experience in trading. Unless you count horse trading, of which the whole family had done plenty. Israel and his partners kept books and corresponded with dozens of different firms—there is no sign of confusion anywhere.

The New York Wholesale Houses

Connections with New York Firms were few, but Israel did have commission merchants in New York, to whom he sent, care of some Somerset skipper, such goods as he thought would sell in New York. There were also a few New York importations. G. B. Miller sent Israel American Segars and Smoaking Tobacco. So did Thomas Agnew. Samu-

el Gray shipped them on. Samuel Waring and Co. sent him some dry-goods in 1820, among which were "cotton flag handkerchiefs" and "imitation shawls".

Whale Oil, Nails, and Pitchforks

Whale oil he bought at wholesale from the Rodmans of New Bedford. Nails, and he sold a good many, were bought from the Fall River Iron Works. Israel bought a lot of pitchforks from Amasa Goodyear of New Haven; two-tined and three-tined pitchforks.

The Leather Trade

His leather goods he did not buy outright, but got them on consignment from John Peckham Jr. of Bristol. Peckham wrote Israel the following letter in 1824:

"Sir. Wishing to keep a quantity of saddling in Swansea for sale, such as harness and saddles, trunks, bridles, etc. and knowing you, I thought I would write you word to see if you would take a quantity of the above articles to sell for me on commission; if you would be kind enough to take an assortment of the above articles to sell please to write me word and at what commission

Yours etc.

Jno. Peckham Jr."

Israel took them. Larned Wilmarth ran a sort of baggage waggon from Bristol up to Dighton and points beyond, and was willing to bring up Peckham's goods as wanted. Peckham and Israel traded with each other with mutual satisfaction until Feb. 6, 1832, when, with the payment of $16.00 in full, the account was closed out. For Israel was shutting up shop.

There are a number of letters in the barrel which throw light on the saddlers' trade.

—"The harness, I calculated for the hearse harness, if they should want it. I therefore put all black buckles."

Mr. Peckham did not believe in a fixed price. "I want you to get the price these things are marked, but if you cannot, you must take less. I had rather you should take less than have a man go away and not buy

on account of price." He was not one to be put upon, either. In 1826, he wrote to Israel:

"Sir

This bill I took of you appears to be counterfeit. I did not undertake to spend it before today and I carried it to the bank to change and the cashier says it is a counterfeit bill. If you will change it and send it back by Mr. Wilmarth you will oblige your humble servant

John Peckham Jr."

In 1828, Mr. Peckham wrote again:

"When I was at your store a few days since, your son (it must have been William Bowers Brayton, he was just twelve years old) said there was a man talking of wanting a saddle. Therefore I thought I would send the one I have on hand. The price is nine dollars. If you please, you may put on a pair of stirrups that you have on hand, and you can arrange them on your book accordingly."

He also wrote: "no doubt you thought the cheeses to be what you recommended them to be, but they are not."

There was quite a bit of trade with the shoemakers; local men. Enoch Babbitt who lived in Berkeley was in the habit of sending down a few shoes every once in a while. In 1830, he brought Israel 9 pairs of boots to sell on commission of ten per cent. But in 1831 he wrote he was so busy he could not make any more shoes for Israel. He had sent down 12 pairs three months earlier. Anthony Morse who lived in Scrabbletown was employed by Israel to mend shoes brought into the stores of Scrabbletown and Egypt. A certain Mr. Chace of Swansea made shoes to order. "If Mr. Chace has no shoes that is raised higher in the instep than common, he must make a pair or else I dont want any." It was not unusual to order a pair of morocco walking shoes. But calfskin shoes made by John S. Russel were more in demand. The calves were born on the farm.

The Cracker Barrel

In Israel's day, the cracker barrel was not a figure of speech. Israel kept a barrel of crackers in his store. In 1824, Edward Wilcox sold to Israel 200 crackers for one dollar. The bill is in the barrel. The next year he

charged only a dollar for 220 crackers. Daniel Saunders' crackers were 210 for $1.00. The amounts billed are small but the bills were frequent. The largest single shipment to Israel was 600 crackers, bought May 20, 1825. This was wholesale. One cracker cost the customer one cent, bought right out of the barrel. I am forgetting the time Israel bought a whole barrel of crackers at once, from Stephen Wrightington, for three dollars. The barrel held 720 crackers, so Wrightington said.

And Horatio Smith sold crackers to Israel. So did Alvin K. Luther. This cracker business was a big one. For of course the ships wanted crackers. I found no "ship biscuit" listed on any bill. The ships bought crackers.

Some of these bakers of crackers made gingerbread as well. Israel usually kept a few pans of gingerbread in stock. They cost him ten cents a pan.

Hearts and Kisses

Israel ran a confectionary department, of course. Isaac Lum of Somerset supplied peppermints, hearts, and kisses. Hiram Buffinton was the Swansea confectioner. He charged 20 cents a pound for his sweets, wholesale. And he sold oranges to Israel, wholesale. Though very few oranges were billed to Israel. It was hard to get them up from the South, unspoiled, in a sailing vessel.

Combs and Codfish and Palm Leaf Hats

The list of Israel's purchases is very long, but I hate to omit the traders in combs Daniel Briggs, Asa Holman, Thomas Coggshell, and Abiel Fuller. Did they manufacture combs? They were Swansea and Somerset men.

James Sherman sold Israel what pork he carried; and many barrels of flour. Though Hezekiah Anthony had most of Israel's flour trade. (See about him later).

Henry Cleaveland, a farmer in Swansea, sold Israel 12266 feet of board at one time. He had a woodlot—and somebody handy with the axe.

Simeon Talbot of Dighton sold Israel hats, felt hats, not straw. Asa Kilby of Somerset kept him supplied with dried codfish. Nathan P.

Johnson sold him all the palm leaf hats and palm leaf brooms he could use. And more. They did not sell rapidly. The palm leaf hats brought up from the South by Isaac White did better.

Windsor soap was a good article to carry, for the turnover was rapid. Abner Beard of Somerset and Henry Sanderson both supplied Israel with Windsor Soap. Powder, more used then than now (not face powder) was supplied by Charles Pettibone. Elijah Corbett has many bills for scythe sneads. And William G. Chace once sold him 2000 cigars.

Garden Seeds

The little trays of garden seeds which stand on many country counters today, were on Israel's counter, of course. In 1828 Israel wrote: "I have a good assortment of garden seeds from the Shakers, for sale."

In 1830, Jeremiah Williams of Warren wrote to Israel: "I have sent you one box or bundle of garden seed; containing 109 papers for which I shall make you a deduction of 20 per cent when sold on account." He wrote a little later: "The time for making a return on garden seeds has arrived. Your balance would be gladly received as soon as is convenient." Jeremiah Williams had sent seed to Israel from Warren from the opening of Israel's first store. The kind of seed he sent never varied.

"Warren, April, 1829.

Mr. Brayton. Dear Sir,

When you were in Warren, you were speaking to me about onion seed from Concord. It has just arrived and should you now want it, I can supply you with a good article at - - - - -

Yours most respected

Jeremiah Williams

by James Gardner"

The only named seeds carried by Israel were:

Concord Onion Seed	Dwarf Prolific Peas
Rob Roy Beans	Early June Peas
China Dwarf Beans	Beet Seed
Early Red Eyed Beans	Clover Seed

Trading with Providence

Trading with Providence was mostly confined to trading with Hezekiah Anthony, Israel's brother-in-law. Hezekiah and his wife, Sally Bowers, had moved up to Providence from Bowers' Shores in Somerset in 1818. On June 15th of that year he opened a wholesale Grocery Store in Whitman's Block at 11 Weybossett Street, Providence, which he conducted successfully for 48 years.

One branch of his trade was extremely successful. He imported rum from St. Croix which was put through the Customs at a small port in Connecticut. The Custom declarations are in the barrel, receipted. Israel sold a great deal of this St. Croix rum. Israel also sold a great deal of flour imported from Albany by Hezekiah. This was "Canal" flour. And Israel sold "Philadelphia" flour, imported by Hezekiah from Philadelphia of course. Flour was billed to Israel by Hezekiah in every invoice. Sugar was billed almost as often. Israel really did sell a great deal of coffee and tea, purchased wholesale from Hezekiah. But some of the China Tea sold by Israel came direct from Canton to Somerset.

Snuff was in great demand. Israel bought it from Hezekiah. The invoices tell of bladders of snuff sent down from Providence. Snuff boxes had been purchased rather often from the Boston Merchants. I seem to remember that there were snuff mills at one time in the South County, but the barrel tells nothing of the origin of Hezekiah's snuff.

Segars were purchased from Hezekiah in large quantities, American Segars were the cheapest. Molasses, salt, ginger, nutmegs, cloves, allspice, and raisens, were supplied frequently. Occasionally some window glass was shipped down, some shaving soap, wrapping paper, corn brooms, salt cod, starch, and of course, shot. There was a gun on every farm.

Gin was bought by everybody; "Jenck's Gin", "Haskell's Gin", and the gin of "Fox Point", and Hezekiah sent down a great deal. There was some demand for cognac brandy, which he supplied, and for many a barrel of "sweet wine".

Hezekiah carried on a correspondence with Israel through the years by means of notes appended to the invoices.

"Mr. Anthony's son died this morning". This was written by a clerk, of course. Mr. Anthony had six sons, all of whom died in childhood, I am told.

"If father is severely ill, I will come down by stage" was written in Mr. Anthony's own hand.

"Perry got in from Spain this morning and is still in quarantine. I do not know how long it will be before he can get down."

"Perry is expecting to sail for the East Indies about October 15." There were a good many notes about Perry.

"Times is hard", at the bottom of an invoice of flour.

"Late news from Europe has checked all speculation, particularly in cotton goods." What news was that?

This close friendship between Hezekiah Anthony and Israel Brayton existed through Israel's life, and he named one of his sons Hezekiah Anthony Brayton. The business relations between the two men were also satisfactory. And well it was so, for business came first and was no more secure than mutual confidence could make it.

TRADING WITH THE LYMAN COTTON MANUFACTURING COMPANY

In 1818, when the Swansea Union Cotton Manufacturing Company was running smoothly and the weavers of the Swansea Company's yarn were well organized, Israel Brayton and John Mason took on a new connection.

The Lyman Cotton Manufacturing Company, operating a Yarn Mill in the village of Lyman near Providence, began to send its yarn to be distributed by Brayton and Mason from their Store in Scrabbletown. In one of the Brayton and Mason ledgers I noticed that in a single year, 1818, home weavers wove 5242½ yards of cotton cloth from the Lyman Cotton Manufacturing Company's yarn—distributed, inspected, and returned by Brayton and Mason.

It was all piece work. The weavers took what yarn they wanted, wove it as fast as they wanted their pay for the weaving. Some people kept a comparatively small amount all winter—the roads, of course, were bad. Some kept the same amount around three weeks or less.

These weavers were not, I hope you understand, weaving for sustenance. There was food enough for all, all over the place. Surplus farm products for the asking, clams for the digging, rivers running with shad and herring, trout in every stream, all free, no license necessary. All the fruit a man could eat—if a man were willing to go berrying or climb a cherry tree. There was shelter of sorts in the old farmhouses and outbuildings. No man temporarily out of luck was ever turned away. Woolen clothing, woven and made on the farm, never wore out. The weavers were not weaving to keep alive, certainly not. They were weaving to get hold of some spending money. To spend on dancing lessons, perhaps, or a trotting horse—black silk dress of fine quality—a real lace collar—a locket—possibly some pretty shoes and stockings. Nearly everybody went barefoot in the summer season, winter footwear in the country had been rough stuff—made to wear well—stockings were knitted at home by hand. On Israel's shelves were silk stockings—really—and bronze slippers, oh, yes.

Life in Scrabbletown cannot be understood unless you know why every man worked and worked hard—at his own pace and when he wanted to—while enjoying a standard of real comfort and independance such as never was known on the globe before. This I truly believe. Nor, in the essentials of comfort, since.

The men and women who wove the Lyman Factory yarn were the same people who wove the Swansea Factory Yarn—that appears clearly in the Yarn Books. Coming for yarn, a weaver was given what yarn was on hand. What else appears clearly, in a note from Wheaton Luther to Israel, even as early as August, 1819, is that the weavers were exceedingly independent. "Weavers won't weave 4/4 for 1 cent per yard more." So they didn't.

Though wages by 1821 were a minor matter. What really mattered by then is apparent in the letter which follows:

"Sir

I do not know what to tell people when they come to the store. All last week I told them they could have yarn on Tuesday. I then told them they could have it on Wednesday. They came in and there was no yarn. And I know no other way at present than to tell them

I shall never have any more and then if I disappoint them it will not be to their prejudice.

I have promised goods in the same way and now I have an opportunity to sell a silk gown for cash but I must lose it because it did not come in at the time I promised. I am very sure that there will be no necessity of keeping the store unless I can make promise of goods and of yarn etc.

Wheaton Luther."

The weave books of the Lyman Company are well kept and Israel maintained excellent relations with both the weavers and the Lyman Company until he shut up shop.

The Lyman yarn was shipped to Israel in Egypt, I suppose. For by 1818 Brayton and Mason had opened a Branch Store in Egypt, a suburb of Somerset, and was using it as another distributing center for yarn. It was far more convenient than Scrabbletown, being close to Slade's Ferry Landing. And close to the shipyards of Somerset and Troy and Egypt. Ships were again on the stocks. That meant more trade for Israel.

Many letters are in the barrel giving itemized accounts of the transactions between the stores of Egypt and Scrabbletown. Goods were always being sent back and forth. But always, as you have seen in Wheaton Luther's letter, the store in Egypt could never get enough.

Israel had to buy a waggon of his own, to send the goods demanded. Nobody could wait for the Troy baggage waggon which crossed the Ferry when the weather permitted, and ambled over from Somerset to Swansea and parts beyond. After careful correspondence, Israel ordered a waggon to be made in Rutland by a certain Mr. Bigelow. It was ordered in the spring and delivered in September. It was a major transaction. There had to be boxes to fit the waggon, of course; and extra boxes. Philip Bowers whose waggon in the early days was hired by Israel, complained that new and better boxes must be furnished to carry Israel's goods—if he was to take them. He used to complain to Wheaton Luther.

You will notice that Wheaton Luther, the Scrabbletown clerk, after being transferred to the Egypt store, took full charge of its running. And wrote many letters to Israel, more than I have space to quote.

Wheaton was an extraordinary man, really. You ought to read all his letters. And the three letters from his sister-in-law, also found in the barrel. They were written in Charleston, South Carolina, in 1818 and 1819.

Wheaton's brother, who seems to have been a bad lot, deserted his wife and daughters, Elizabeth and Catherine, some years before this story opens, and nobody had been able to find him. His deserted wife wrote to her brother-in-law, Wheaton, to tell him that a Somerset man had seen her husband in the "Spanish Settlements" and that he was in bad shape. "An object of pity to behold." It was not thought he could live long. He had, I infer—only infer—been enslaved by the Spaniards. Wheaton's sister wrote: "I fear he is now numbered with the pale nations underground". Yes, she really did.

As to news; Mrs. Luther wrote that Giles Luther and his son, "a very fine young man", had called on her in Charleston—dropped in from Somerset—and "thair has been several shaks of an Earthquake in this place that are very alarming". In a later letter: "Death has taken away thousands from Charleston this past summer. It was truly disturbing. Scarcely a family escaped without one or more taken away.—I have put Catherine and Eliza both to school."

It is apparent that little Egypt had connections in 1819 with the outside world—vivid connections.

Some years later, Wheaton Luther resigned to go into business for himself—he belonged to a restless family. John D. Cartwright took his place. Later still, Cartwright resigned, also to set up his own business, and John Wood signed the letters of the Egypt Store. Under all the clerks the business continued to grow. And would have grown even more rapidly thought all the clerks, if only Israel would send them more goods to sell, more yarn for the hungry looms of Somerset and Troy.

After two years of prosperous and expanding trade, the firm of Brayton and Mason had been dissolved. John Mason opened a store of his own with the U. S. Post Office in one corner as was usual. Israel had taken a new partner, his cousin, William Bowers, and continued his business as though nothing had happened. According to the barrel all was amicable. There are papers showing that Brayton later bought

some small things from Mason and that Mason bought some small things from Brayton—nothing much. Possibly Mason had held Brayton back a little. For now with his new partner, he expanded rapidly. Though still with caution.

In that spring of 1819, Israel knew, and we can know, exactly where he stood. He knew down to the last India Shawl just what was on the shelves of the little stores, for an inventory was necessary when the partnership as dissolved. The barrel held also a list of the people who owed the firm money. In fact, there were three lists, each very short. The amounts are tiny. I will not give here the names of the customers who were expected to settle their accounts shortly, they were the ordinary charge customers. But I am giving the two other lists—they are really interesting. For Israel guessed right. They never did pay up. One man went to jail. Their accounts, however, were very very small.

Doubtful that these persons will pay what they owe.		Certain that these persons will not pay what they owe.	
Caleb Butterworth	Somerset	Slade Chace	Somerset
Francis Chace		Frederick Downing	Freetown
Hezekiah Chace		Diadema Hathaway	
Mason Chace		Knowles Negus	
Slade Chace		Benjamin Purinton	Swansea
Phoebe Chace	Swansea	Oliver Read	Troy
Stephen Earle		Joseph Slade	
John Eddy	Somerset	Stephen Slade	
Rebecca Luther			
Nathan Read			

TRADING WITH THE SWANSEA PAPER MANUFACTURING COMPANY

In 1819, the new firm of Brayton and Bowers signed an agreement with the Swansea Paper Manufacturing Company to sell its product. There is so little known outside the barrel of this paper company that when I found this contract in the barrel, I was surprised. I consulted the standard "History of Swansea".

"Straw paper was manufactured in Swansea in 1840 by William

Mitchell". That is all the History has to say. But the barrel holds 50 papers, in addition to this contract of 1819; individual transactions of Brayton and Bowers with the Swansea Paper Manufacturing Company continuing into the year 1832. The agent was always William Mitchell. He signed every document.

Paper was really made out of straw in Swansea and was sold by Brayton and Bowers to many different firms and individuals. That much is clear. The paper on which the correspondence of the firm was written, ought to have been of the firm's own manufacture. But was it?

The paper may not have been very good. Israel got some returned. Where did the Swansea Paper Company get its straw? How did it make its paper? The barrel does not know.

The employees of the Paper Company, like the employees of the Yarn Factories, were allowed to charge things in Israel's Scrabbletown Store. And some of the notes asking for credit for employees and signed by William Mitchell, are in the barrel, so we know who some of the paper makers were.

And that seems to be all that we do know about the paper business in Swansea. It seems to be more than anyone else knows.

TRADING WITH THE GEORGIA COTTON MANUFACTURING COMPANY

The new firm of Brayton and Bowers received that spring of 1819 the following letter from Kezia's uncle, Nehemiah Wheeler.

"Respected Friend

Israel Brayton

I recollect that sometime past thou expressed a wish to git yarn from the South to weave. (I thought he meant south of the Mason and Dixon line, but he didn't. He meant South of Providence). I would now observe that I expect to go out thair soon and will probably start next week and any business That I can doe for my friends I am willing to use my indevors to preform.

I shall likely be at thy farther Anthony's next first day, if healthy, and weather permits.

In haste I remain thy friend

Nath. Wheeler."

Israel and probably Kezia went to the Anthony Farm that Sunday, and Israel told his wife's uncle that he would like to git some more yarn to weave.

Nathaniel Wheeler brought the Georgia Cotton Manufacturing Company and Brayton and Bowers together, and very soon in Israel's office another ledger was being opened to show Israel's transactions with the Georgia Company. This Georgia Yarn Mill, it had 1000 spindles, was built on a fall of 18 feet of water in the Woonasquatucket River, in that well-watered land south of Providence where grist mills and fulling mills and saw mills and snuff mills had utilized the little streams from the earliest days of the Colony. The Village which sprang up along the river bank, was named for the Mill, of course, and both were called Georgia because the cotton which came up from the South to be spun in the mill, was grown in Georgia.

In 1822, about two years after Israel had opened his first weave book in account with the Georgia Cotton Manufacturing Company, the mill shut down. The stream ran dry. The mill had been run by water power, of course.

When the rains came, and they were long in coming, the mill got going again, but Brayton and Bowers seem to have made other plans by that time.

The office of the factory had been in Providence, and the business with Israel had been transacted by Samuel Nightingale, as Agent. On Jan. 1, 1821, Nightingale dunned Israel for a "small quantity of yarn" unpaid for. The office clerk who usually signed the office letters, was named James Shaw, but the dun was sent out personally by Nightingale, himself.

The yarn of the Georgia Factory was woven by the same people who wove the yarn from the other factories doing business with Brayton and Bowers, as the yarn books show. But not by all of the same people. For the amount of Georgia yarn to be spun at any one time was not large. In the Georgia Weave books we find mostly the names of the old settlers of Fall River.

The ruins of the stone mill still stand beside the stream in Georgiaville.

TRADING WITH TROY

In 1820, the Fall River Manufactury, built a little earlier, on a bank of the Quequechan River in Troy, was incorporated. David Anthony, Israel's brother-in-law; Dexter Wheeler, his wife's uncle; and Abraham Bowen, were behind its building, and, under the circumstances, Israel got yarn for his farmhouse weavers, as soon as it was spun in any quantity by this Fall River Yarn Mill. Making the connection still closer, it was David Anthony who took charge of the running of the mill—call him Agent or treasurer. In the year of this incorporation of the company, 1820, Anthony sent over to Israel's Egypt store, a consignment of cotton yarn, woven at once by the weavers of Somerset into 253½ yards of plaid cloth.

At another time, David Anthony as Agent, sold Israel, outright, some blue and white warp, for $77.00. And the weavers of Swansea wove it into bedticking which Israel kept for his own trading purposes.

Toward the end of his trading career, Israel bought from the Fall River Manufactury some cloth not only spun but actually woven in the mill. He bought 52 yards of checks at $.15 a yard. The downfall of Israel's big yarn business was at hand, for this cloth, woven as well as spun in the factory, was not too bad—not too bad.

The weave books that Israel must have kept to record his trading with the yarn mill of Troy, were not in the barrel. So all the information we have on the matter is contained in a few letters and bills which passed between Mr. Brayton and Mr. Anthony, as they were careful to call each other on paper. Except, of course, the names of the Troy weavers who wove the yarn for other factories, and appear in other yarn books. And we have found in this way that a very great number of Fall River-Troy people did home weaving for Israel. The Fall River-Troy nomenclature is confusing, for all during the barrel period, that part of the present City of Fall River which lies along the banks of the lower Quequechan River, was legally called Troy. Though it had been called Fall River before 1804 and was called so again after 1834. In all the weave books "Troy" is used, always. But some of the oldest and more sophisticated concerns had letter heads with "Troy. Fall River".

That part of the present city of Fall River which lies around Brightman Street, was in the barrel days called Freetown. And in the Weave Books are many persons listed as living in Freetown. Their names can be found on the tombstones in the old North Burying Ground. You will find 12 members of the Brightman family in the Weave Books. And 20 members of the Read family who lived at the foot of French's Hill.

I am somewhat clumsily explaining to the present generation that most of the old families of Fall River had one or more members who took yarn from Israel Brayton and wove it up into cotton cloth right in their own homes on their own looms. And that this yarn they wove was spun in the factories of Fall River as well as in a number of small factories on the west side of the Taunton River. I am printing at the end of this book a list of the people who are known to have done this weaving, and it is surprisingly long, for the village was small. But I think, even so, it is not a complete list.

Israel had other connections with Troy, of course. He bought nails from the Iron Works as soon as the Iron Works made nails. He sold nails to the ships that were building in Somerset and Egypt. Ships had to have kegs of nails on board, of course, and Israel took to outfitting ships, getting requests for odd things, such as "a few yards of white flannel suitable for lining pea-jackets". And "Tarpolin hats."

The ship "Rosette" of Troy bought her stores from Israel in Egypt. The ship "Rambler" of Troy landed 240 pounds of yarn one day in Egypt, for Israel. The sloop "Reindeer" bought her stores from Israel. But the Troy ships were a bit high and mighty. Troy was beginning to grow. Hezekiah Anthony wrote from Providence to Israel in 1827:

"To Israel Brayton. Sir:

I could not get the Fall River Packet (the new Steamer "Handcock" this may have been) to take your goods today as the amount was so small. I expect the Somerset Sloop here tomorrow. I presume she will take the goods and land them on Slade's Ferry Wharf."

I presume she did.

David Anthony, who was actually manager of both the Iron Works and the Fall River Factory, took the trouble to write the same little notes

to Israel that the other Factory managers had written. Not many were preserved.

"Fall River Factory and Iron Works Nov. 18, 1820

Mr. Israel Brayton

Please to let Mrs. Handy have $2.50 in goods out of your store, it being for 2 weeks board for Severin Handy and charge the same to me. David Anthony."

"Mr. Israel Brayton, Sir:

Mr. Anthony wishes me to say that he has reserved for you $500.00 worth of stock in his bank and wants you should inform him whether you are depending on it. Please to say by return stage.

M. C. Durfee."

This was in 1825, when the first bank in Fall River was organized. The Fall River Bank and the Fall River Factory were one. As Hezekiah Anthony, David Anthony's brother, had written to Israel in 1820: "I consider bank stock as good if not the best property you can at present have", I think Israel took up the offer. Israel's connections with Fall River banks were close. But he used the Warren Bank, established earlier, more often.

One odd result of Israel's trading with everybody for everything, was that he was paid in many sorts of money. (When paid in money at all) He used to wait until he got a bagful, and then he would send the bag to a local bank or even up to Boston and get the quoted rate of exchange. Silver dollars were not wanted by any wholesale house or bank. Though they were worth a dollar, that was conceded. But crowns, doubloons, francs, and guineas were Israel's coin, taken in over the counter in Swansea and Egypt. Nothing parochial about Israel.

Various little business firms were just starting up in Troy during the barrel period. Israel traded with Lovell and Durfee—a certain John Brayton was their clerk—they sold Israel yellow snuff. In 1824, Cromwell Bliss of Troy sold Israel 1000 cigars.

And Israel sold some of the Swansea Paper to the Troy Merchants. Seventeen quires were returned because it was not of the first quality. "It is not the quality that you recommend it to be."

THE TRADER IN HIS HOURS OF EASE

The trader of the barrel period did not, consciously, travel or work in his garden for pleasure or recreation. Those pursuits were means of livelihood. When he was through for the day, if he ever did get through, he was glad to go home and sit a spell. He was tired.

He did not serve on committees whose purpose was to ameliorate the condition of the poor. Each man was, then, expected by public opinion to support himself, his wife, his children, his wife's parents, his own parents, and all the unmarried women and widows who could claim kinship even to the third or fourth cousinly degree. If they were in need. As each man was expected to do this, it really left nobody to be supported by community effort. It also left the definition of need to the man who was paying the bills, which meant that the aid was adequate—public opinion saw to that—but not extravagant.

There was after this business of earning a living for so many people, very little leisure in the life of any man. I have searched the barrel to see just how Israel Brayton spent the little leisure that was his.

The Poor They had with Them

There were two persons in the village who were without kith or kin. Nor were they related to each other. They were poor and they were old and sick. Israel used a little of his spare time in visiting these people—an unpaid job—and he got nurses and doctors for them when such were needed. He got the best doctors and nurses in town, the only doctors and nurses, apparently. These poor old people were dependent upon their neighbors for at least partial support. Israel used to receive during store hours over the counter notes such as this:

"Swansa. August 29, 1827.

Mr. Brayton

Sir: Please to let Diadema Boiston have fifty cents in goods

this week, and as much more next week; and charge it to the Town and you will oblige your friend John Earle".
(Diadema Boiston was probably one of the Acadians allotted to Swansea some years earlier.)

This was business for Israel; pretty small business you think; but honestly conducted a very safe and sane way of administering "Poor Relief". Occasionally Diadema Boiston did some housework, for which she was properly paid. It was Israel's housework.

To Aid the Veterans

Israel saw that the crippled veterans of the last two wars got their government pensions, he saw that the doctors made examinations and sent in reports.

"We, the subscribers, practising physicians of the Town of Swanzey, County of Bristol, State of Mass., do hereby certify that after a careful examination in the case of Henry Lawton who is now on the pension roll of the State of Mass., we are of the opinion that his disability does still continue. Occasioned by canister shot passing through his left hip also by a musket ball through his right thigh, and further that the degree of disability under which he labours at present is one third, being not less than the original degree of disability for which he was placed on the roll".

The authorities sent the following letters:

"Mr. I. Brayton.

Dear Sir:

We are under the necessity of returning the power of attourney you favored us with. Under a new regulation from the War Dept. all old forms are laid aside and new substituted. We now enclose you those blanks by which you will see how they are now to be made."

Four days later, he received another letter: "We are sorry to find that we sent you the wrong blanks—a new form is now indispensible."

The barrel has held through the years a Surgeon's Certificate never filled out.

The School Committee

Israel's special service to the community was as a member of the School Board. He conducted the correspondance with the school teachers. There was no clerk, no paid assistance. Israel wrote the letters for the veterans and for the school committee with his own hand.

Israel attended the many meetings of the school committee, and took time to get a very accurate picture of the schooling he and his neighbors were providing for their children. Teachers did not stay long in Swansea or Somerset, but I fancy they did not stay long in any country town. For they were mostly men and women who were teaching to get a little money to start in on something else. All the letters in the barrel show that they could write a good hand and express themselves coherently. A sample letter will be enough. Though Israel had to read them all.

"The subscriber makes a tender of his services to the inhabitants of the second school district in Swansea as a teacher for the term of three months to commence on Monday the 3rd inst. And he assures those who may think proper to intrust their children to his care, that if the most strenous exertions on his part can prevent it, their confidences shall not be misplaced. Hoping by assiduous application and unremitting attention to ensure the patronage and meet the approbation of his employers— Jos D. Nichols"

"In consideration of which, we, the subscribers, agree to furnish wood for the school, board the said Nichols in our respective families, and pay him the sum of fourteen dollars per month which shall be apportioned according to the number of scholars set against each of our names respectively.

Israel Brayton—3
Gardner Anthony—1½
Betsey Bowers—1½
John Mason—3"

Captain Charles Pratt taught for a much longer period than was usual.

"We have obtained satisfactory evidence of the good moral character of Captain Charles Pratt, also of his literary qualifications and capacity for the Government of an English School."

That was how the committee appointed to look into a teacher's application felt about qualifications. Israel was on the committee.

I must not leave out the lady teacher, the barrel has record of only one. Her name was Miss Sophia Stebbins.

"Whereas it is contemplated that Miss Sophia Stebbins will commence a school, in this district, to be continued for 4 or 5 months, at the rate of one dollar 33 cents per week, and that for the use of the school house she pay 50 cents per month, to be appropriated to the keeping of the same in repair; we the subscribers agree to pay our proportion of the expenses of such school, and to furnish our proportion of boarding for the instructress, according to the number of scholars set against our respective names.

Israel Brayton—3
Perry Bowers—1½
John Mason—2½
John Winslow—1½
Stephen Brayton—1
Lloyd Slade—1½"

etc etc.

Israel really did good work on the School Board in his leisure time and it is only to be expected that in his business hours he sold School Books over the counter.

The books were: Alden's Spelling Book
" Reader
Morse's Geography
Murray's Grammer

He carried slate pencils and slates and exercise books. And Song Books.

Church Activities

Israel was—not unduly—interested in the church in which he and his family owned pews.

The Church choir was not a paid choir nor was it a good one. Some people thought it should be trained. Israel headed a committee to get a good singing teacher down from Taunton. Mr. Sproat, a Taunton

lawyer, was consulted. He seems to have been a personal friend of Israel's. And some of his letters are in the barrel. Arrangements were made. Letters passed.

"April 2. Taunton

Travelling is so bad—the date of the meeting must be postponed."

"Mr. Sproat was married Sunday Evening". (A hint of the marriage customs of the time)

It was understood that the Singing School was to be kept "in Swanzey Village the ensuing winter, by Mr. Jonathan G. Colburn, for the benefit of the Baptist and Methodist Societies in the Towns of Swansea and Somerset."

They got the singing school and Israel sold a good many song books. But he found getting the subscribers to pay for the school, difficult. The village men argued that since they really had no musical ability, they should not have to pay for instruction they could not "themselves use". But the committee argued "the burden of expense should not fall altogether on the shoulders of those who are favored with voices to sing."

The barrel holds another letter showing Israel's relation to the church which he attended and served in many ways. Hezekiah Anthony wrote him from Providence:

"December 23, 1824.

Mr. Israel Brayton. Sir:

I am requested to inform the People with you that Lorenzo Dow intends to spend next Sabbath at the Methodist Meeting House in Somerset. He expects to be at Warren on Saturday night. On Sunday morning to go to Somerset to preach, as I suppose, all day. Please to give notice accordingly.

Your friend

H. Anthony"

Lorenzo Dow was the fasionable evangelist of his day. There is a "Life" of Lorenzo Dow, mostly a printing of Dow's diary. Strangely enough, the dates on which Dow is supposed to have been preaching in Swansea and Somerset, are left blank. I think it quite true that the men of Somerset and Swansea, though men of their time, were not an excitable lot, and would not have provided Lorenzo with any very spectacular

results. He had just come back from Ireland, where he had preached the gospel as he understood it, up and down the country, without losing his life, and the diary thinks that a triumph.

I rather think that Israel and the other men trading around Scrabbletown, went to hear Lorenzo Dow hold forth—and yawned.

After the visit of Lorenzo Dow, Israel stocked his shop with Bibles.

Israel and Literature

Always at all times Israel kept a stock of Almanacks on hand. The fascination of Almanacks for those village men is to me incomprehensible. But it was genuine. They read almanacks in their leisure time. (Bibles, of course, but to those men the Bible was not literature). Israel always carried "The Farmer's Almanack", and "The Rhode Island Almanack". He ordered at the first of the year, but he reordered as the year progressed. He also took subscriptions to popular magazines. The most popular was the "Zion's Herald". My grandmother who came from that part of the world, used to subscribe to the "Zion's Herald". I remember it quite well. There was some demand for the "Manufacturer's and Farmer's Journal" and the "Telescope". The "Rhode Island American" and the "Providence American", with a few subscriptions to weekly newspapers, were sold over Israel's counter. Papers were late, and people complained and sometimes cancelled their subscriptions. As Edward Anthony of Taunton wrote: "This paper did not go on Wednesday on account of the travelling. (This was February 27, 1829). Most of the Mails have been carried on horseback, and it is quite uncertain about your getting the paper today. I am glad that you have obtained those subscribers and I hope you will get more. Money is scarce, snow in abundance, and but little news."

The leisure time of these Scrabbletown traders was not spent in reading books; is this quite clear? Israel did not stock books, because there was no demand for books. He knew perfectly well what people wanted. The Newport paper was advertising "The Solitary, or the Mysterious Man of the Mountain. Translated from the French of Viscount d'Arlincourt by an American Lady". Also "Helen de Tourneau.

a Novel by Madam de Souza. 87½ cents." Israel did not even carry the paper which carried the advertisement. He did not carry "Roche Blanche: or the Hunters of the Pyrenees". Which was a Romance, written by M. A. M. Porter. It was popular but not in Scrabbletown, Israel thought. He had opened his first trading station the year Scott's "Guy Mannering" was published in England. But he did not stock Walter Scott, either. Probably never heard of him. That was the year Jane Austin's "Emma" was put on the market. Byron belongs to the early years of Israel's trading. The "Poems" of John Keats were just out. Shelly and Wordsworth were becoming known to the English world of letters. Not to the world of Scrabbletown, I think.

Scrabbletown and Israel were quite right. Their countryside was a place of such beauty that all their lives were lived against a background of harmonious color, lovely line, and wide reaches of quietude and peace. The fields were full of sheep and oxen which were so much a part of their still pastoral lives. The little white sails were hurrying up and down the lovely rivers of their land. The bearded sailors, sitting in the sun, told them tales of all the faraway places, the bearded sailors being their own sons and brothers who were emphatically glad to get home. There was little need to look in the pages of any book, they all felt, when the shad bush was in flower and the shad were running free. Better go fishing.

And they did. And in the Fall, when they had any spare time, they went hunting for bears, over in the great forest.

Did they pine for Romance, History, Biography, Poetry? I have not heard that they did. They were even a little fed up with Romance. And Heroism. The older men had seen Jemima Wilkinson dressed like an angel riding through the village on a white horse—her golden hair flying in the wind. It was a hotheaded young cousin of theirs who had paid for the horse, and followed Jemima to his undoing.

Toussaint L'Overture had been a slave of theirs, they knew all about the darkly glorious Rebellion in Hayti—a lot of the village boys had been down there on their own ships. They knew Jerathmael Bowers, too; he was one of their own. He was the Bowers who married out of the village a beauty and a belle, and built her a wonderful fine house

in Somerset, and hired Coply to paint her portrait—all dressed up she was—life size, with a pink rose in her bosum. And when it came to heroes, which they never did like to come to, being of New England, who could touch Washington? They had all seen Washington, many knew him. Some of them knew Lafayette. The crippled and the pensioned men, sitting out on the back porches, could still tell—and they probably tried to.

Sir Walter Scott would, I am sure, have seemed a little tame to these men had Israel succeeded in selling him over the counter. Better by far, if restless, get on your father's little boat and sail off to the Sandwich Islands for a change. So they thought and so they did. And they always came back as soon as possible and went clamming.

Israel and Politics

Politics, as a means of livelihood or as the occupation of a gentleman with some leisure, was unheard of. The barrel holds a few communications from far off representatives in Taunton or Boston who wanted Israel to get out the vote occasionally. New Bedford, according to the barrel, wanted a new jail. Israel did not want New Bedford to have a new jail. That seems to have been the only time he got roused. He wrote that he could not get the village to take much of a stand, because they had sort of planned to go off hunting that week end.

Is this all in the barrel? Indeed it is, and more. But do not forget that Israel sold school books and that the turnover was rapid.

TRADING IN STRAW BONNETS

The following letter was received by the new firm of Bowers and Brayton in June, 1819.

"Raynham

Messrs Brayton and Bowers

Sir

You may recollect that about a month since, I passed through Swanzey and happened to see you where you was erecting a new Store. You told me that in about a month you should like to purchase some

straw braid. I have about 2000 yds. on hand, of a good quality, and can take in a considerable quantity more. If you wish to make a trade with me, be so good as to write me your terms. I had a word or two with a milliner nearly opposite you about some braid (name unknown). If you should not like to trade, be so good as to give him this information.

Yours respectfully

Nehemiah Jones."

From the letter, we see that Israel and his new partner were building a new store for themselves. Mason kept the old one. (The builder, Gilbert Chace, was paid $160.00 for the building. The cost of the hardware was $8.13). The lumber was bought in Freetown, also the shingles.

Apparently Israel had been planning to engage in merchandizing straw bonnets. Nehemiah Jones of Raynham was a wholesale dealer in straw braid. This is possibly the same local straw that was made into paper.

On July 21, 1819, Jones wrote again.

"Messrs Bowers and Brayton

Sir

Yours of the 13th is received. Respecting the straw braid, I would observe that I must have a part cash if I should trade with you. Cotton goods at fair prices will answer for part pay. I am now making some bonnets for a man that will pay half cash and half goods at wholesale. I am in want of some shirtings, checks, and plaids—perhaps you can furnish me with them and with yarn also. I have the straw braid on hand and wish you to write me immediately whether you can agree on the price of the straw braid, for it would not be worth while for me to be at the trouble of coming to Swanzey unless there is a prospect of our trading.

Yours respectfully

Nehemiah Jones."

Israel decided to buy a large quantity of braid and place it out in the farmhouses of the villages, where the farm women would sew the braid and shape it into bonnets and then bring back the finished bonnets to Israel and get paid for their work—so much a bonnet—as they were paid for their weaving—so much a yard.

Israel also planned to keep a little straw braid in the store, for customers who might like to make their own bonnets.

The plan went through. Israel found girls who wanted to sew the braid. On July 28, 1819, Jones wrote to Israel again:

"Yours of the 23rd inst. on hand. In answer to which I would observe (as I wrote to you before) that I should like to trade with you providing I can have a part cash. I have been selling my best goods for straw braid and unless I can have about one half cash for the braid, I may as well get my bonnets made here. The cotton goods which you mentioned are such as I am in want of if we can agree as to the cash and the price of the straw and the goods. You wished me to inform you when I would call on you. I think it likely that the last of this week or Monday next will be agreeable to me. I shall bring a few thousand yards of braid with me.

Yours respectfully

Nehemiah Jones."

They did finally agree about terms. (But there were many more letters.) On August 19, Ardelia Targee took home 422 yards of straw braid to make into bonnets. And she also took 10 knots of cotton thread to sew the straw together. She was to be paid three shillings apiece if the bonnets were well made. On September 22, she returned some bonnets. But on September 17th she had taken another lot of braid, 813 yards, with twelve knots of thread. So it went. Polly Hathaway on Sept. 10, took 1120 yards of the braid. On December 23, 1357 yards more.

September 13, 1819, Patience Luther was added to the list. She took 1066 yards of straw. She was followed by Permelia Allen, Sarah Anthony, Nancy Francis, Betsy Cushing, Clarinda Trafton. Eliza Davis, Almiry Shorey, Nancy Walker, and Hannah Hood. These names all appear in the first Bonnet Book which Israel kept as he kept the Yarn Books. Other names were added in 1820 and later. The industry flourished, though it met with difficulties. No man made these bonnets. And no older women. It was a young woman's job. Though J. A. Carver "pressed" the bonnets—a man's job and a hard one.

We know so little about these young bonnet makers—so little even about their work—that it may not be amiss to tell you what the records

have preserved about one of the bonnet makers, Sybel Alleyn, who took some straw in 1820 but died before she could get the bonnets finished. As Wheaton Luther was her executor, his papers were kept in the store, and found their way into the barrel where they did not belong. Luther was appointed administrator by the Probate Court in Taunton, and his appointment is in the barrel. It has a great weeping willow at the head of the sheet. Wheaton was expected to charge up his expenses as administrator, to the estate, and he did so. "my time, horse, and expenses at Probate Court, Dighton, $2.00."

Sybel Alleyn had been quite ill, and Dr. Ebenezer Winslow charged $3.50 for the thirteen visits he had made during that illness. This includes medicines. A cord of wood had been bought for Sybel, from Lloyd Slade, for $5.00. She owed for several purchases from Israel, at the store. There was a bill from David Brown who had rented her a horse and chaise to go to Pawtucket—$3.67. And another horse and carriage to take her to Rehoboth and back, 14 miles—$1.19. And after her death there were more expenses, Abraham Shove made her coffin—$9.00. Ezra Bliss dug her grave, $1.00. The spirits at her funeral cost $2.84. But this came out of the estate expenses. Wheaton Luther bought the spirits at Israel's store, for it was there he was clerking. And it was there that he received a letter from the poor girl's heirs. Charles Y. Allen, who signed himself "Your friend and loving servant", wrote that his wife and one daughter were very sick with fever, and that he could not get help to nurse them without paying for it. He needed, he wrote, "pecuniary aid". He wanted the estate money at once. "For it is an hour of peculiar trial."

Obviously the bonnet makers were not poverty stricken people. But I know little about them as I have said. One thing I do know. They shared a distaste for regimentation. They wanted to make bonnets the way they wanted to make bonnets. Israel had trouble.

When a few bonnets were finished and pressed, Israel had the carpenter knock together some boxes in which to pack them. These boxes were loaded onto a Somerset ship to be taken by Captain Gray to New York where he was to sell them if he could. They were a new venture for Israel and he really did not know where to find a market. The

bonnets were not selling in Scrabbletown; and they did not sell in New York, he found.

So in the Fall of 1819, Israel decided to expand his market and take his bonnets to the milliners of Albany.

Israel in Albany

In the late Fall of 1819, leaving Bowers to run the trading at home, Israel took passage on the sloop "Henry", about to sail for Albany, via New York. The "Henry" had been built in the shipyard at Egypt, and it was commanded by Captain Brown, a Somerset man. Israel paid $9.00 for board and passage.

Besides his boxes of bonnets, and some calico, Israel took along for trading purposes, corn, rye, iron ware, cheeses, and some barrels of Taunton River Shad. As this was the fall of the year, the fish must have been salted or pickled. The bill for carting the shad to the boat was 17 cents. Reaching Albany, Israel wrote to his partner:

"after looking and inquiring among the milliners, I find that Bonnets is dull. Capt. James Sherman thinks there is no doubt that I can sell braid and bonnets in Troy (New York) where I shall go in a few days." The rest of the letter was eaten by mice. But we know he did go to Troy. Upon returning to Albany he wrote:

"Albany. November, 27, 1819

Mr Wm. Bowers

Sir. I have to inform you that I have done my best to effect a sale of my Straw Hats, but have sold only eight and sold them for—. When I first arrived here, I went to see all the milliners and they gave me grate incouragement of buying the Hats, and one in particular bought six, and a lot of straw. It was evening and she would not take them until morning. I went in the morning. She would not pay me the money, but would in goods. So I did not sell them.

As I wrote you in my first letter, there is a great many straw hats sold in this place and are supplied from New York. I have seen the bills of a grate many hats that was bought in New York about the same quality of mine from 12 to 17 shillings. But they will not give me so much as they will in New York.

I have been to Troy, but cannot sell any.

Mr Gray arrived here last evening and he tells me that he has the same box of hats that we sent by him to N. York. I shall take them with me to New York, and sell them or leave them with a commission merchant to sell.

I have sold 17 barrels of shad at $10.00 per barrel. I have bought about 500 pounds of butter, and some other small notions—we expect to leave this place in three or four days and expect to be to home in the course of 12 or 15 days, wind and weather permitting.

Israel Brayton"

By the time Israel got back from Albany, the ice was in the river and no cargoes went out from the villages until the spring. On January 18, it was noted that ice extended from the south end of Prudence Island to the Narragansett Shore entirely across the bay.

William Bowers in Newport

The enterprising firm of Bowers and Brayton had not been discouraged. Israel merely thought that he was not adapted to the part of travelling salesman. As indeed he wasn't. William Bowers took over. Late in March in 1820, Bowers engaged passage on the sloop "Henry" and took on board rather a large cargo of bonnets as well as other trading staples from the store. The "Henry" put in at Newport, down the Bay. Bowers wrote to Brayton from Newport.

"April 15, 1820.

Mr Israel Brayton

Dear Sir: I have ranged this market through, respecting Straw Bonnets. Have only sold twenty for $2.25 each, on three months credit. I find bonnets dull here, and people afraid to buy for fear they will not sell this Spring. Those bonnets I have sold, not only sold, but have notes for them. You can be assured that I have disposed of as many as what I thought, whether we get the pay or not; I think it altogether possible that I shall sell four more for the same price before we leave. We shall set sail this afternoon if wind and weather will permit.

I find one great objection to our bonnets, that is the crown. Most of them are too small. Likewise the brim is too narrow. Therefore you must have them made larger in every way without fail. I find that it will be of no use for us to carry on the business unless we attend to it closely. The largest of our bonnets will answer but the larger part of them is too small. I have lost the sale of some on that account or at least cannot get so much for them. Where I carried the bonnets, they would try them on their children's heads, and finding them too small, would throw them aside and pick for all the largest sizes; which, if the larger ones are picked out, it will render it difficult to sell so many small ones, or at least we shall not get more than a third price for them. This will not answer for us, for we have to give as much for making small ones as large ones. Be very particular about taking in good braid. I would not take any unless good. I think we had better curtail the business a little at present for we have a great many bonnets on hand. And I am afraid we shall find it hard work to sell what we have on hand, for we have a great many bad patterns.

If we curtail the business, we shall be able to attend to it better. We should make about 300 a year; have very new braid; and have the bonnets made very well. Likewise we should realize in the end more profit than if we made a 1000. Therefore if we make bonnets well and finish them off well, and can recommend them, I presume we can find a market for a few. Therefore it stands us in hand to have such bonnets made that we can recommend. If I should carry some of our bonnets to some people they would laugh at us, and what is the reason? Because they are badly manufactured. Let us say we will have good bonnets made and no others. Then we shall be able to get three dollars each and make a profit.

I think we shall be able to sell about 40 bonnets in this place about the 10th of May. The patterns that sell best is the ones that turn up behind. I trust you will now make such ones. Tell Mrs. Bowers now that I am well and hoping she is the same. Give my respects to your wife, Hannah, and all enquiring friends.

You told me that Captain Brown lives well. O, my God, that I was not so particular. I have great objections to dirty people. I am scarcely

able to eat a mouthful without thinking how it is cooked. Be so good as to let my wife read this letter.

Your obediant and

Humble Servant

William Bowers."

In Newport, Bowers sold 6 bonnets to Margaret Landers; 6 bonnets to Elizabeth Champlin; and 6 bonnets to Elizabeth Townsend. These were the milliners of the town.

William Bowers in Albany

On reaching Albany, William Bowers wrote another long letter to Israel.

"April 18th, 1820

Mr Israel Brayton

Sir:

I regret to inform you that the debt you contracted with Mrs. Ring is entirely lost. She has sold all the Bonnets you left with her to sell on commission. I think she is a notorious Character for she had five bonnets unsold and she would not give them up. I have made out to get in ribbons of her about eight dollars worth. I have settled with her and have taken her note for the Balance which I am fearful we shall never obtain. The pay for the balance due us is $110.00 so I suppose we shall be able to get part of our pay in—tape and buckram, and if you think it is best to take it in that, wright her word and direct your letter to New York, and if you think it not worth while to wright but leave it altogether to my judgment, let that be it. If you wright, I should like to know your opinion whether I shall lay out what money I have or bring it home.

I assure you goods is very low of all kinds and still falling every day. Accordingly you will be very careful how you buy for I assure you goods will fall on our hands if you buy many. The sales of our bonnets in New York was very bad. I sold only 2 and was in hopes business was better up the River and concluded to try it. Since our arrival to Albany I have sold only 9 for $2.00 each, cash. I think I shall be able to sell

a few more tomorrow We shall go to Troy. Then I shall be able to sell a few more. If I should not be able to sell out—if you wright, wright word whether it will be best to bring them home or leave them with Talbot to sell on commission. I would sell all our bonnets before this time, if I would sell on credit. But I am afraid of another Ring Scrape.

Inform Mrs. Bowers of my wrighting and tell her I long to get home for I never was so homesick before. But I presume it is all oweing to having such a likely woman for a wife, but at least it would give me grate satisfaction to set in the corner and chat a while with her. I have not enjoyed one single moment since I left home. How is the little boy? I presume he is well and if so, take good care to keep him so.

The manner of living aboard of a vessell is so different from what I have been used to living, it takes my appetite all away. I long to get home to fill up with something that I can relish. Give my respects to all enquiring friends and tell them I am well but want to get home. Hoping that these lines will find Mrs. Bowers well and all enquiring friends; as to the straw business, I think we had better curtail in a small manner and dont take any braid only that which is very nice. I have lost the sale of a grate many on account of poor braid and badly put together. The business must be carried on with care and attention. I shall be home about the first of May if nothing happens. It is very late in the evening therefore I must quit writing.

Yours respectfully

William Bowers"

"I have almost forgot about your shad. I found them in New York at a place where they would never be sold and I concluded you would be glad to sell them and have taken them with me but have not sold them yet. Shad is worth almost $2.00. Be so good as to let Mrs. Bowers have this letter. Take good care of the Pig.

W. Bowers"

"What bonnets you have made, must be made to turn up behind, all of them, for the others will not sell. The fashion is now for bonnets to have their turn up behind and round corners in place of square corners where the ribbon comes down to tie under the chin."

William Bowers in Savannah

In the Fall of 1820, when the bonnets had rather piled up on Israel, and there was a good deal of cloth on hand, the partners decided to make another venture. William Bowers took passage on the same sloop "Henry" of Somerset, and sailed down to Savannah, Georgia, where he opened a "stand" or small store and spent the winter trying to sell the bonnets and the shad and the cotton cloth he had brought South. The sloop "Henry" did not intend to return to Somerset before Spring. You could not sail small sloops through the icy waters of the North Atlantic and up the ice bound channel of the Taunton River in mid-winter, not safely. The newspapers of the period are full of accounts of shipwrecks—especially off Block Island. And some of the too adventurous little ships just disappeared. Bowers expected to find other winter bound ships and ship captains from Somerset in harbours along the southern coast. And he did.

Captain David Pierce was in Charleston. He had written to Israel as follows:

"Sir,

I take this opportunity to inform you that I am enjoying good health at present and all the rest of our Yankey friends, and am in hopes that you and your friends are enjoying the same blessing.

Captain Gibbs is here, well and hearty. Give my compliments to my parents and to the proprietors of the Stone Cutters' Bank and likewise the new bank set up since I left there, by the females. I expect it will go by the name of the Weavers' Bank. I am in hopes they will be able to hire me seven cents when I return.

Give my compliments to all that take the trouble to enquire after me. Tell Ruth Wilcox that I am afraid her old beau, Anthony Marion, is lost, for he took charge of the schooner "Jane" and came out over Georgetown Bar the first of January, to come out and come in here, the same day; and that night we had a heavy gale of wind and he has not been heard of since.—The weather is very cool and windy. Rains two days out of three. Times is very dull here. Produce very low. I wish

you would answer this letter the first opportunity. You must excuse me for writing in this manner for sailors cant write like Merchants.

Yours

David Pierce."

In Fayetteville, Captain Benjamin Gibbs was resting after an illness. His health had nearly returned and he expected to go back to Somerset in the Spring. Captain Joseph Gibbs had died down there. It was thought, however, safe for the rest of the northerners to remain through the winter as no return of the sickness was expected until August or September. Capt. McDonald was intending to stick it out.

Of course Bowers must have written to Brayton as soon as he arrived, but the first the barrel knows of his arrival is through a letter he sent to Hezekiah Anthony. Hezekiah wrote to Israel:

"I have received a letter from William Bowers (in Savannah) who requested me to say to you that if you was going to send him any more brown shirtings he wished you to send them immediately. If they were of good quality and full ¾ wide he would give you 12 cents a yard or he would sell them on commission for you together with the bonnets if you send some that was new and of good pattern and good quality, he had no doubt but what they will do well.

As there is a vessel to sail in a few days, what you conclude to send, you had better have them here in the course of a week from this time. The shirtings, if you send any, he says you must see that they hold out in length.

Your friend

H. Anthony"

"N.B. Your goods I have just sent by water to be landed at the Ferry".

Bowers' letter to Brayton, finally arrived.

"Savannah, Feb. 24, 1821

Mr Israel Brayton

Dear Sir

I received the case of bonnets shipt by Capt. Hezekiah Anthony some time since, and since I have received them I have sold 10—of the High Crowns. The low crowned ones will not suit this market. But I think it more than probable I shall be able to get rid of

what you have sent. Therefore if you will send me 2 cases more, immediately, I think I can sell them to a pretty good advantage. The ten I have sold will average about $2.75 and if you conclude to send anymore you must have them very nice. Different patterns and some to turn up behind.

Perhaps you will be able to get the proceeds in about three months, as if nothing happens I think you will see a person that way about my size. But if you think you can do any better with the bonnets than to entrust them to my care, it stands you in hand to do it.

If you have any cotton goods on hand that you wish to send on commission, I shall be happy to receive them and do the best I can for you. But if the shirtings will bring 14 cents in Boston, you had better send them there. As Mr. Anthony wrote me sometime since, you observed that your shirting would bring 14 cents in Boston and if so it is more than you will realize if you send them here after deducting the expenses. But I have my doubts whether they are worth 14 cents in Boston, and did at the time I received the letter.

Old Friend, Mr. Brayton, if you will allow me the expression, what shall I say to you about the City of Savannah and the Trade. In the first place, the City is a low sunken Hole and all the cookery is carried on by Black People and they are a dirty and nasty sett to speak plain upon the subject. The victuals very often go against my stomach as I am pretty particular about my victuals you know. I shall come home "thin as a hatchet" as the old saying is. In the next place, Trade is pretty good, if you can get hold of the right end of it, and have a good stand.

In the next place, the expenses—shop rent is $140.00 per year. Taxes is enourmous and to meet the expenses you must do pretty good business or you had better go to David Jones' Locker. As to Trade, week days and Sundays is all alike. We sell and keep open Sundays as well as week days. Business was never known so dull in this City before. I suppose it is owing to the fire last season and, what was worse than that, the sickness thinned off a great many, but there is a grate deal of building going on at the present and I presume business will be better another season. Mr. Brayton, many has been the tears I have shed since I have

been in this city, on acct. of sickness. My nearest neighbor was taken away but a few days since and I assure you it is very sickley and who knows but it will be my turn next. But I hope to see my dear family once more before that solemn day appears. I have got to be quite contented and when I shall return it will be very uncertain. I conduce that I shall save myself this season.

Yours with the utmost esteem.

William Bowers.

Please to send word to my wife that I am well and I have wrote to her this day and have sent it to Mr. Anthony and she will receive it soon after you receive this, and send word to my mother and family that I am well and all my friends and likewise I wish to see them soon."

On the outside of this letter these words appear:

"John Cotton arrived with a load of cows here after I sealed this letter."

Another letter found in the barrel might be inserted here. It is rather more businesslike.

"Darien (Georgia) March 19th, 1821.

Mr Israel Brayton

Sir, I must confess I have been negligent in not writing you but for the most part have been very much confined in business. Your notes were due before this. I have sent word to William Bowers in Savannah to make arrangements with you for me to pay him in Savannah what I am owing you.—

We have made a small shipment of rice and sundries, and expect to ship a lot of cotton in a few weeks. No doubt but you have heard of my entering business with my brother since I arrived here, which I did not expect when I left home.

You will be so good as to write me an answer by return mail. You will direct your letter to Allen Smith, Postmaster, Darien, Georgia. As he has been appointed postmaster of this city.

Give my respects to all enquiring friends. Your factory goods sold well—but bonnets. — In haste I remain your friend etc.

Daniel Smith"

Captain Pierce, whose letter to Israel has just been quoted, wrote to Wheaton Luther from Charleston on April 18, 1821.

"It is with pleasure that this day I have an opportunity of reading a letter from your honour.—it is very healthy here but times is bad—and dull— I am now aloading with cotton and a little rice and shall have a deck load of yankeys and if nothing happens I shall sail for New York the 25th of this month and then I will come on and see what you are about—our lumber is all sold, all our yankey friends are well; give my respects to my parents and all my girls and tell them I am coming.

David Pierce"

David was apparently not interested in straw bonnets. But his sister made them for Israel.

In 1828, Israel received a letter written in Troy, (Fall River), by John S. Cotton. He is the man who took a deck load of cows to Savannah from Somerset in 1821. He writes:

"I have received some money for a judgment against the man who sold your bonnets—viz—from N. Carolina. N.B. This is all the money I have yet received from N. Carolina."

The bonnet story, complicated and peculiar, goes on and on.

How long Nehemiah Jones traded in Straw Braid, how long the farm women made bonnets, I do not know. The Bonnet trade continued to be a minor but specific part of Israel's trading, as long as he did any trading at all.

When a child, back in the nineteenth century, I remember there was a milliner in Somerset who sold bonnets made of braided straw of a natural straw color. I went with my mother when she bought one—trimmed with the most lovely deep brown velvet ribbon—spotted with white.

I have it still. It ties under the chin.

TRADING WITH THE ORIENT

One day William Bowers decided to take the goods of Brayton and Bowers still farther afield. He did not enjoy travelling. He did not like strange countries. But trade was a little dull at home. He and Israel

decided to take the risk and get together a cargo which would neither make nor break them, and might build up their regular business considerably.

The Columbian Sentinel of Jan. 2, 1819, which Israel carried in his store, had printed the following advertisement:

"The subscriber, being about to embark for Canton, China, via Gibralter, where he will reside for a considerable time, offers his services to the public for the transaction of the usual business of the place."

References were given. But Brayton and Bowers did not need references. They knew all about Philip Ammidon, the subscriber. He was a village boy. And when William Bowers decided to go to Canton, the fact that Ammidon had been living in Canton for some time, may have been of some influence.

I do not know just when Bowers left Somerset for Canton. It was perhaps in 1825; it took a long time to sail from Somerset to Canton. The following letter from Bowers arrived in Scrabbletown:

"Canton. March 25, 1826

Mr I. Brayton

My dear Sir.

From the many good wishes which have been manifested toward me as well as my family from you, I feel myself under many obligations to you and can, while in my hours of meditation, think of you and your respectful family, and do feel myself well assured that this short epistle will be cordially received from your well-wisher and fellow-traveller in life; although I have nothing very interesting to communicate at the present moment but presume it will serve to pass a dull moment to peruse it.

I left Lima, Nov. 11, and bent my course to the West and on the 19th of December arrived at the Sandwich Islands where I disposed of some merchandise and, after repacking, set sail on the 25th following, and bent my course towards Manilla, the Capital of all the Spanish Settlements in the East.

When I arrived on the 16th of February was somewhat disappointed in my expectations in getting a cargo. However, loaded my ship, and set sail on the 1st day of March and arrived at this place on the 12th

inst. and have been much diverted on looking at the multitude of people and the manner of living, such as if I should undertake to give you description would require a small volume; therefore we will let it suffice in saying they are so thick they are obliged to live upon the water in floating boats or houses. . . . . the most of wearing apparel is cheap, such as crape, silk, satin, nankin, etc. Teas are rather high. Such as suit the American market. But very large quantities will be in the U. States soon after this comes to hand. . . . . When I shall be with you the Lord only knows for I am certain I do not—you may show this to my wife if she behaves pretty well, and be cautious how you trust her with good account at your store, for unless I have better luck than what I have had, I am shure you will get disappointed in having a settlement on my return, or rather, get your money.

Remember me to her, however bad she may appear to be, as well as to your wife and honoured parents, and hope the Good Lord will permit us all to meet again. Tell her to be cautious of those Brawling Characters (he must mean the Gypsies of Hot and Cold Lane) that get adrift in that neighborhood about this time of year or a little before, for I wish I could have them on my passage down the Pacific when the wind blows from the North . . . . nothing more at present

So I bid you adieu
and to bed go and remain
Your well wisher and friend
W. Bowers."

In September, 1828, Bowers and Brayton were selling Canton Crape over the counter in Somerset. And China Tea.

TRADING WITH THE BRISTOL COTTON MANUFACTURING COMPANY AND THE MOUNT HOPE MANUFACTURING COMPANY

Brayton and Bowers had branched out still farther in that busy year of 1819. They started to trade with the Bristol Cotton Manufacturing Company. This Company had a small yarn mill in Wellington—the

village is now called North Dighton. Most of the stock belonged to James deWolf of Bristol.

In December, 1820, Israel returned a consignment of yarn to the Factory, which had been woven into "stripes" and "plaids". His weavers were given more of this Bristol yarn in January and this they also wove. And more. But the factory was not doing well. The following letter seems to me interesting.

"Wellington. 12 of 11th month. 1821

Friend Israel Brayton

I was so much ingaged that I could not wright by Stephen that I wish thee to come up here next second day which is the 15th instant, as that is our co-meeting and I want to see thee about the weaving. We are now collecting over 100 lbs a day and if we can dry the yarn we can make out over 30 webs per week and I want them wove as fast as we make them, and I wish thou would not fail to come here next Second Day as early as possible and take a load and have some talk on our factory business as I never nowe what plans Williams and some others have afoot.

Please to attend and oblige thy friend

Nathaniel Wheeler."

Shortly afterwards: "Please to come up and take a load of pieces the day after tomorrow. Come thyself and I will be at home. I have some important business with Thee. Fail not to attend and oblige

Thy Friend

Nathaniel Wheeler."

The important business about which they were so annoyingly secret was the merger of the Bristol Cotton Manufacturing Company and the newly formed and struggling Mount Hope Manufacturing Company.

The barrel has several weave books of these companies and Israel did a big business with them. Although the following letter would not lead you to think so.

"Wellington. 9 of the 2 Mo. 1821

Friend Israel Brayton

I have this day sent back 2 pieces and have kept several that I ought to of sent back; but I am willing to due all that can be thought

is in Reason. I cannot take any more so bad as I have received. In overhauling all the cloth we have received from thee, I find it to come far short for goodness to what we git wove at the Dighton Manufact. Co., and I must now be plain, and shall put some to another and see if we cannot git some better cloth. (The Dighton Manufacturing Company must have started weaving in 1821) I shall be still willing to continue our contract but must have good cloth. I have sent an order on James d'Wolf for one hundred dollars and I have not much on hand.

In haste thy friend

Nath. Wheeler

For the Mount Hope Manufacturing Company."

In the next letter received by Israel, C. R. Vickery turns up as clerk.

"Respected Friend

Israel Brayton. We are very much in want of plaids and we wish thee to get all thou canst and fetch it up to us tomorrow. So we can send it to Boston the day after. Call at E. A. Hathaway's and get what he has on hand. By doing as above requested thou wilt confer an additional favor on the Mount Hope Manufacturing Company."

You see, although the weavers wove badly at times, it was as I said earlier, impossible to be too strict. This is one of the few proofs that any factory sent back any. (Though they all complained.) For they all needed all they could get—at once.

The Mount Hope Management did as the other yarn factories did, it wrote little notes to Israel, authorizing credit.

"Mr. Israel Brayton. Sir. Please to let Misses Kingsley have what cloth she wants and send a bill of it and send back the other order and we'll give you one for the full amount.

B. Anthony" "For the Mount Hope Company."

Still—this letter came—

"We have not any yarn for webbs now and dont think it is probable that we shall have any very soon.

Yours

for Mount Hope Manufacturing Co.

per Perry Anthony."

That did look bad. But hear this one.

"Respected friend, Israel Brayton

We have not any webs for thee today, we shall have some by Fifth Day but not so many as we shall have by Seventh Day, when I think thou canst have a tolerable load.

For Mount Hope Comp.

William Marvel 2nd"

There are 264 papers in the barrel showing the costs of this yarn, etc. and there are several weave books. The weavers are the same weavers who wove the yarn for the other yarn mills.

TRADING WITH THE WARWICK COTTON MANUFACTURING COMPANY

In 1820, the partners added another venture. They made connections with the Warwick Cotton Manufacturing Company. This was a yarn mill, situated of course in Warwick, and equally of course managed by a man named Greene.

The Warwick yarn was handled as the other yarn had been handled. There was a written contract. And lucky for Brayton and Bowers that there was. For in 1821, the partners cut their losses and stopped trading with the Warwick Cotton Mill. They received a letter from the Manager.

"I am somewhat disappointed in your discontinuing the bargain so soon" wrote Mr. Greene to Mr. Brayton. "However, you had the priveledge of quitting when you thought proper."

An unusually large part of the Warwick yarn went into the homes of the weavers of Troy. This can be seen in the Warwick Yarn Book.

From Pawtucket, in October, 1821, Brayton and Bowers received a letter offering more yarn to weave. The letter was signed by J. H. Gridley. I do not know what Corporation Mr. Gridley represented.

- - - -"Wish you to write by the first mail, as we have written to others who no doubt will do it for us - - - - but we should prefer your having it. We shall have a great deal of yarn to put out for a year - - -"

I insert this bit of apparent futility that you may see that Israel was "approached" by even more business concerns than he could trade with. He certainly branched out. But not, I think, into Pawtucket. There is nothing more about Mr. Gridley in the barrel.

TRADING WITH THE DIGHTON MANUFACTURING COMPANY

In 1822 the Dighton Manufacturing Company got its first charter. Israel Brayton was one of the stockholders; though it was a long time before he paid for his shares and I am not sure that he ever did. Perhaps the shares were tangled up with his agreement to serve as an outlet for the yarn.

James d'Wolf was a director, owning 36 shares. Frequently he went up to Wellington from Bristol to attend the directors' meetings. Twice at least he called on Israel in Scrabbletown, on the way up. He never found Israel at home; at least, he couldn't find him, and left notes, which got into the barrel. He was not pleased with Israel.

The stockholders' meetings were at first held in the new home of Nathaniel Wheeler; Kezia's uncle, you remember. He had sold out his blacksmith's business and built a fine brick house in Wellington. It is still standing in the village, I am told. In 1827, he wrote as follows to Israel:

"Respected friend "Dighton 5 mo. 21st, 1827"

Israel Brayton

I have for a long time calculated to call and make thee a visit, both on friendship and business, but things have turned out such that I have not been to call. I am now finding myself in want of 600 to 1000 barrels of menhaden fish for manure, and I want the principal part of them after haying. Should there be some time dull weather, I can take them any time after the middle of next month.

Now if thou can agree with one or two or more of the fishermen to deliver me the above quantity of good menhayden fish at the Landing where Peleg Gardner has formerly landed for me, and make me fair measure, I will take them, after the middle of next month at any time,

and the above quantity, and pay thee cash when all are delivered; and the reason of my taking this course is that I have here-to-some made a bargain for 500 bbls. and perhaps got 150, or in that proportion, and I have thought that you will be more likely to obtain the quantity. I shall expect to pay twenty five cents per bbl., if you cannot git them for less; and I will pay any bill thou may present for thy trouble. Please write me by return of male the prospect. As I shall leave home the day after tomorrow for the State of Main to be absent 2 weeks. If thou cannot inform so soon as a week or ten days, do so that I may know on my return home, and oblige

Nath. Wheeler."

We do not know too much about this Wellington-Dighton Factory. There are 70 notes in the barrel showing phases of the industry. But I could use more concrete information.

For one thing, the company sold stoves. Could they have been running a Company Store? Mr. Allerton, who bought one, was a clerk in the factory office and he took it to Newport and gave it to his mother-in-law who found it satisfactory. But stoves?

Also, how soon did they start weaving, in this Dighton Manufacturing Company's Mill? The following letter seems significant.

"Dighton, July 25, 1828.

Mr Israel Brayton

Sir. As you offered, when last here, to endeavor to procure us three good weavers by the name of Lewin, and as we are now and probably shall continue to be plagued for help of that description, you will benefit the company very much by engaging them on the best of terms you can—please let me know if you are likely to succeed or not in getting those above mentioned—should you not with them, perhaps you may with others.

very respectfully

Your obt. Ser.

Wm. M. Allerton"

And that is postively all I am going to tell you about the factories that traded with Israel Brayton and his partners.

THE TRADER GOES BACK TO THE FARM

When Israel Brayton's father, John the farmer, died in 1829, the life of Israel, the Trader, went on as before. Captain Stephen Brayton, Israel's brother, returned to the farm and took over. He had been engaged in a few ventures of his own, as we know from letters found in the barrel.

The widow, Israel's mother, petitioned the court to appoint Israel administrator. In June, 1829, he made an account of his administration. And that was all.

Stephen found in the house of his inheritance his mother; an aunt; a sister, Content, the old maid of the family; (all households had them). These women were absolutely dependent upon him as they had been upon his father, and he thought it right that this should be so.

To him had descended not only the use of the house but the use of all its furnishings. And these furnishings were astonishingly good. It was the age of mahogany and fine cabinet makers. John Brayton, according to the inventory found in the barrel, had owned a mahogany desk, a mahogany card table, a mahogany round table, a pair of mahogany dining tables, 8 mahogany arm chairs, a mahogany light stand, and a chest.

From an earlier age of even better cabinet makers, there was a cherry Pembroke table, a maple table, a high chest of drawers, 8 dining chairs, a tall clock, 7 bedsteads, 8 leatherbottomed chairs, 12 flag bottomed chairs, a pair of ordinary looking glasses, a gilt framed looking glass, a floor carpet—who has better? There was a brass fireset, 8 feather beds and 24 pillows, coffee and tea sets, 12 tablecloths—and of course a "weaver loom" and "2 spinning wheeles".

On the farm were 2 yoke of oxen, 13 steers, 2 horses, 31 sheep, 21 lambs, 4 swine, and 14 pigs—2 ox carts, 1 horse sleigh and bells, 1 horse wagon and harness, 1 cider mill and press. Under Stephen all remained on the farm, and life went on as before. That some of these articles were bought through Israel's Scrabbletown Store, we know.

Stephen died suddenly in 1832. According to the custom of the country, Israel, the trader of Scrabbletown, closed down his trading

posts, and went back to the Farm of his fathers as his brother Stephen had done. He took over the responsibility of running the farm and the family.

He was still a young man, just turned 40. His eldest child, Mary, was 18. There was Elizabeth and Nancy and John Summerfield, and David, and Israel Perry and William Bowers—all born in Scrabbletown—now moving down to the Homestead Farm by the Taunton River. And there were more children coming—Hezekiah, Sarah Submit.

It was a young household, ambitious, with a fine house and money to spend. Israel's mother was an old lady, of course, well content to sit in the chimney corner. But there was Aunt Content, Israel's sister, Stephen's widow and his children, and probably some others needing shelter at the moment; Mary Morrison, for instance.

The house was perhaps a little crowded—it must have been. Mary, the oldest of the children, seems to have thought so. She left. We hear of her teaching school in the village of Troy, now called Fall River, as I noted earlier.

Kezia, Israel's wife, was mistress of the house and of all that was therein. Which included all that she and her husband had brought from Scrabbletown. There was indeed plenty.

Kezia was not, however, a good housekeeper. No, she was not. For in all her housecleaning she never cleaned out the barrel that Israel had brought over from his Scrabbletown store and put up in the attic.

To her negligence, we owe our chance to see at first hand how the traders of Scrabbletown lived in those days now all forgotten.

Weavers who lived on the East Bank of the Taunton River

(on territory now called Fall River)

Baker, Jonathan
Barker, Hicks
Barnaby, Lucy
Bennett, Anna
Bradford
Grace
Hannah
Ruby
Ruth
Sweet
Black, Mary
Bliffins, Amelia
Olive
Pamela
Royal
Valentine
Boomer, Crocker
Hannah
Sally
Nathaniel
Borden, Amos
Stephen
Bragg, Samuel
Briggs, Josephine
Welthy
Burroughs, Isaac
Olive
Butts, David
Sarah
Brightman, Benjamin
Edward
Gardner
George
Henry
James
Lois
Lydia
Lucy
Mary
Nathan
Pardon
Challoner, Thomas
Chace, Benjamin
Hannah
Harriet
Hezekiah
John
Moses
Palmer
Stephen
Clark, Henry
Mary Ann
Cleaveland, Abigail
Bertha
Henry
Olive
Cobb, Abiah
Ann Maria

Cobb, Joseph
Corey, William
Cummings, Jail
Davis, Howard
Joseph
Nancy
Pa—
Downing, Frederick
Joshua
Durfee, Thomas
Eaton, Apollos
Elsbree, Aaron
Nathaniel
Omer
Ely, Joseph
Evans, Caleb
David
Josephus
Leonard
Thomas
Freelove, Stephen
Gifford, Benjamin
Royal
Goodwin, Nicholas
Gregory, Thomas
Harris, Abigail
Julian
Polly
Harrison, Elisa
Hathaway, Abigail
Diadema
Enoch
George
Gideon
John
Hathaway, Lydia
Malbone
Michael
Olive
Peleg
Rosamund
Russell
Ruth
Silas
Hawkins, Lydia
Horton, Benjamin
Hunt, Benjamin
Lawton, Francis
Marble, Elizabeth
Rebeccas
Ruth
Miller, Ebenezer
Phoebe
Robert
Sophia
Negus, Benjamin
Knowles
Sally
Nichols, Hannah
Pierce, Cynthia
Job
Raymond, Benjamin
Read, Abigail
Betsy
Brayton
Catherine
George
Hannah
Joseph
Lucy

Read, Martha
Mary Ann
Nancy
Nathan
Rosamund
Ruby
Ruth
Sally
Stephen
Susan
William (Captain)
Ripley, Bradford
Rogers, Lucy
Sampson, Ebenezer
Simmons, Nathan
Tryphena
Smith, Judas
Snell, Abiah
Snell, Amos
Baylis
Rebecca
Susan
Sowle, William
Strange, William
Terry, Job
Tew, Sally
Thurston, Amey B.
Jonathan
Tubbs, Rebecca
Wardwell, Joshua
Whitwell, Olive
Winslow, Frederick
Isaac
John
Luther
Young, John

Weavers living on the farms and in the villages west of the Taunton River

Adams, Nathaniel of Swansea. (Wove badly)
Allen, Permelia
Allyn, Sybel
Anthony, Ann Maria
Gardner
John
Mary Brayton
Sarah
Baker, Joseph
Nancy
Barton, Nancy
Bliffin, Mary, daughter of Royal
Bliss, Hannah of Wellington
Lucinda of Rehoboth
Lucy
Lydia
Bosworth, Amos
Gardner
Hope
Bourne, Anna of Somerset
Betsy
Francis
Jonathan
Stephen
Bowers, Gertrude
Sarah of Dighton
Bowen, Betsy of Warren
Hannah
James
Bowen, Jonathan
Jabez
Lydia
Martha
Brayton, Daniel of Swansea
Brown, Esther of Somerset
John of Swansea
Joseph
Lydia
Sarah
Sharlot
Buffinton, Betsy
Benjamin
Elisha
Eunice
Mason
Bullock, Levi
Bush, John W.
Burr, Betsy of Rehoboth
Butterworth, Caleb of Swansea
Lydia
Sarah
Canedy, William B.
Carey, David of Barrington
Cartwell, Lydia of Swansea
Cartwright, Margaret of Somerset
Chace (Chase) Abner
Bethany
Deborah
of Swansea

Chace (Chase) Edward of Somerset
Hope
Lurana of Swansea
Lydia
Luther
Martha
Nabby
Nehemiah
Mary of Somerset
Phebe
Rebecca
Reuben of Swansea
Sarah of Somerset
Samuel
Stephen
Wanton
Kingsley, Anthony of Swansea
Barton
James
Ladew, Curtis of Barrington
Lee, Israel of Dighton
Lewin, Nathaniel of Swansea
Sarah
Luther, Ann B. of Somerset
Eliza
Eunice
James
Nancy of Warren
Patience of Somerset
Rebecca
Samuel
Susannah
Susan
Luther, Theophile Upham
Macomber, Nancy of Swansea
Noah
Mark, Lucy
Martin, Abraham
Elizabeth
Sally
Marvel, Elizabeth
Joseph
Lorna
Patience
Rebecca
Ruth
Mason, Mary
Miller, Lydia of Warren
Morrison, Clarissa of Swansea
Mary
Munroe, Bosworth
Thomas
Norton, Eliphalet of Rehoboth
Palmer, David of Swansea
Jonathan
Pettis, Martha
Patty
Perry, David (negro)
Phillips, Samuel
Pike, Phoebe
Ruth
Pierce, Lewis
Lydia of Rehoboth
Sarah of Swansea
Pitts, Alice
Potter, Anna
Purinton, Benjamin

Purinton, Eunice
Read, Otis of Dighton
Rice, Elizabeth of Swansea
Richards, Patty of Dighton
Rhounds, Betsy of Rehoboth
Joshua
Susannah
Robinson, Patience (a widow) of Swansea
Sherman, Atherton
Loisa
Robert
Shorey, Almiry
Shove, Abraham
Lydia
Nathaniel
Sisson, Isaac
Isaih
Susannah
Slade, Alexander of Somerset
Almira
Betsy P. of Swansea
Elisha of Somerset
Eliza
Henry (Capt.) of Swansea
Mial of Dighton
Martin of Swansea
Mary (negro) of Warren
Phoebe of Somerset
Polly of Swansea
Prudence of Somerset
Stephen of Swansea
Waity, (d. Charles)
William of Somerset
Snell, Sally of Dighton
Swazey, Polly of Somerset
Talbot, Josiah C. of Swansea
Targee, Ardelia
Thrasher, Isaac
Thompson, James of Somerset
Trafton, Clarinda of Swansea
Elias
Valentine, Betsy
Vennaman, Rebecca
Walker, Nancy
Waterman, Asa of Dighton
Weaver, Nathaniel of Somerset
Wheeler, Sally of Swansea
White, Betsy
Wilbur, James of Somerset
John
Wilcox, Job of Swansea
Williams, John (negro) of Warren
Wilson, Hezekiah of Swansea
Rachel
Winslow, Bethia
Betsey
Ebenezer
George
Rebecca
Seth
Whitmarsh, Clarissa of Dighton
Fanny
Wood, Hannah of Swansea
Israel
George of Dighton
John
Otis of Swansea
Wright, Abigail of Dighton

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